A Miscellany of Current Verse

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A Miscellany of Current Verse

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A Miscellany of Current Verse

A Companion Volume to
"The New Spirit in Verse"

Compiled and Edited by

ERNEST GUY PERTWEE

Author of *The New Spirit in Verse*, etc., etc.
Examiner in Elocution for The Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music,
Examiner for the Guildhall School of Music.

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PREFACE

A Miscellany of Current Verse is primarily intended as a companion volume to the *New Spirit in Verse* which was published last year. My idea in compiling this collection is to place before those interested in the art of speaking verse a number of poems by authors not included in the former volume; and, except in the case of a few writers who were already represented in the *New Spirit*, I have done this. This anthology is by no means intended to be a representative volume of verse of the day, but, taken in conjunction with the *New Spirit in Verse*, it will, I hope, to some extent reflect the spirit that to-day is animating modern poetry.

E. G. P.

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A MISCELLANY OF CURRENT VERSE

THE HILL

PANTING the horseman topped the glowing hill,
Before them spread fine shafts of an orange sun ;
Behind them rose the old rain-rotted mill,
Whose sails no longer spun.

The earth smelt new with rain, their horses steamed
And stirred the silence with a champing bit.
Along the road a few still puddles gleamed
With fires a last ray lit.

One said, " Tomorrow will be wet again,"
And read the sky with unperturbed gaze ;
" Good night ! " They dug their heels and shook
a rein,
And rode their diverse ways.

John Alford

BY THE SEA

We cantered over the golden shore,
And wild on the breezes flew your hair ;
And full and strong
The live sea's song
Chimed like gold in the sunlit air
—The echoing air that tossed and bore
Our shouts more high than the seagulls were.

Where the cliffs close in to the sea's blue edge,
We reined our horses and sprang to ground,
And tied them fast
To a splintered mast,
Then under the cliffs our cave we found,
And there on a purple-weeded ledge
We tuned our songs to the hushed sea-sound.

We sang that we two were under the seas,
Domed in a melted chrysophrase :
Like opiate dreams
On the curling streams.
Fishes passed in a rainbow maze ;
And the spoils of two lost argosies
Lay at our feet in the sandy bays.

Your hair with its moving sprays caressed
Their bullion heaped on our coral bed
—Gold and gold
Of a wealth untold—

But your hair was the ransom of kings, I said :
And I twined your tresses and starred your breast
With gems that a queen had coveted.

Ah, think of them, love, the queens of the East,
Passionate, dusk, eyes dark as the sea !
    Terrible, great,
    In love and hate !
Now ? They are less than our day dreams be.
She who staked for her passion-feast
Fabulous Egypt, where is she !

Martin Armstrong

NOT AT HOME

" CALLERS ! Good God, they're coming up the drive.
    Quick, the back door !
Our towels are in the passage," " Man alive,
You've spilt the cigarettes upon the floor."
And panic-stricken across the hall they fled ;
Slipped through the kitchen. " Save us, that's
    their tread
Upon the gravel. Jane, the front door-bell !
We're out." " You naughty boys'll have me tell
More lies,—and to the vicar too ? " " No lie,
    Behold, we're gone."

So off like hunted hares across the rye,
And down their secret pathway to the wood,
Not daring even to breathe until they stood
Under green leaves alone !
Each saw his reflex wavering in the pool,
And felt the wind's touch cool
Upon his shoulders, as he threw his coat
Beside the broken boat.

Flinging their clothes away, they seemed to fling
Propriety, convention, everything
Clogging and irksome, after ;
Felt in their hearts the old Pagan glee revived
And the play of dappling sunlight on their skin,
And naked, unimprisoned, full of laughter,
White spirits cleansed from sin,
They shouted loud, ran to the brink, and dived.

Then as they floated through the eddying swirls
Slung lasso-like from the fall that hisses and foams,
Or sleeked to a brightness like the hair of girls,
They saw through the waving wreaths of beech
and oak
Blue deeps of heaven, and one laughed softly and
spoke :
" God save us from all callers and At Homes."

Martin Armstrong

THE RETURN

Why are your eyes like dead men's eyes,
And the cold eyelids scored with pain?
"For lack of golden autumn skies,
And sight of meadows after rain."

Why are your fingers stiff and spare,
And cold as marble polishèd?
"For lack of smoothing children's hair,
Or touching aught but dead."

Your voice is like the wind that bends
The withered rushes on the marsh.
"Long exile from the voice of friends,
And too much wailing made it harsh."

Your feet are travel-stained and torn
With rugged ways, and wasted sore.
"From wandering over moors forlorn
And leagues of solitary shore."

An outcast in a land forgot,
Clothed with dead hopes, with sorrow shod,
I seek for rest and find it not,
Fallen from the memory of God."

Martin Armstrong

THE VOLUNTEER

HERE lies a clerk who half his life had spent
Toiling at ledgers in a city grey,
Thinking that so his days would drift away,
With no lance broken in life's tournament.
Yet ever 'twixt the books and his bright eyes
The gleaming eagles of the legions came,
And horsemen, charging under phantom skies,
Went thundering past beneath the oriflamme.

And now those waiting dreams are satisfied;
From twilight to the halls of dawn he went;
His lance is broken; but he lies content,
With that high hour, in which he lived and died.
And falling thus he wants no recompense,
Who found his battle in the last resort;
Nor needs he any hearse to bear him hence,
Who goes to judge the men of Agincourt.

H. Asquith

THE CHILD'S GRAVE

I CAME to the churchyard where pretty Joy lies,
On a morning in April, a rare sunny day,
Such bloom rose around, and so many birds' cries
That I sang for delight as I followed the way

I sang for delight in the ripening of spring,
For dandelions even were suns come to earth;
Not a moment went by but a new lark took wing,
To wait on the season with melody's mirth.

Love-making birds were my mates all the road,
And who would wish surer delight for the eye,
Than to see pairing goldfinches gleaming abroad,
Or yellowhammers sunning on paling and sty?

And stocks in the almswomen's garden were blown,
With rich Easter roses each side of the door;
The lazy white owls in the glade cool and lone,
Paid calls on their cousins in the elm's chambered core.

This peace, then, and happiness thronged me around.
Nor could I go burdened with grief, but made merry
Till I came to the gate of that overgrown ground,
Where scarce once a year sees the priest come to bury.

Over the mounds stood the nettles in pride,
And, where no fine flowers, there kind weeds dared to wave;
It seemed but as yesterday she lay by my side,
And now my dog ate of the grass on her grave.

He licked my hand wondering to see me muse so,
And wished I would lead on the journey or home,
As though not a moment of spring were to go
In brooding; but I stood, if her spirit might come

And tell me her life, since we left her that day,
In the white lilied coffin, and rained down our tears;
But the grave held no answer, though long I should stay;
How strange that this clay should mingle with hers!

So I called my good dog, and went on my way;
Joy's spirit shone then in each flower I went by,
And clear as the moon, in coppice and ley,
Her sweet dawning smile and her violet eye!

Edmund Blunden

THE SOUTH-WEST WIND

We stood by the idle weir,
Like bells the waters played,
In moonlight sleeping through the shire,
As it would never fade:
So slept our shining peace of mind,
Till rose a south-west wind.

How sorrow comes who knows ?
And here joy surely had been :
But joy like any wild wind blows
From mountains none has seen,
And still its cloudy veilings throws
On the bright road it goes.

The black-plumed poplars swung
So softly across the sky ;
The ivy sighed, the river sung,
Wool packs were wafting high.
The moon her golden tinges flung,
On these she straight was lost among.

O south-west wind of the soul,
That brought such new delight,
And passing by in music stole
Love's rich and trusting light,
Would that we thrilled to thy least breath,
Now all is still as death.

Edmund Blunden

THE TIME IS GONE

The time is gone when we could throw
Our angle in the sleepy stream,
And nothing more desired to know
Than was it roach or was it bream ?
Sitting there in such a mute delight,
The kingfisher would come and on the rods alight.

Or hurrying through the dewy hay,
Without a thought but to make haste,
We came to where the old ring lay,
And bats and balls seemed heaven at least.
With our laughing and our giant strokes,
The echoes clacked among the chestnuts and the oaks.

When the spring came, up we got,
And out among the Ammet Hills,
Blossoms, aye, and pleasures sought
And found ! bloom withers, pleasure chills ;
Then geographers along wild brooks,
We named the tumbling-bays and creeks and horse-shoe crooks.

But one day I found a man
Leaning on the bridge's rail ;
Dared his face as all to scan,
And awestruck wondered what could ail
An elder, blest with all the gifts of years,
In such a happy place to shed such bitter tears.

Edmund Blunden

THE WINDS

So old they are, so young they are, whose tuneful voices stirred
The tree-tops of Atlantis : whom skin-clad hunters heard,

And dark Arcadian lovers and 'plaining poets too,
When thought was in her cradle and human speech was new.

They saw Iolcos shining, the Argo by its shore;
They heard the Sirens calling in mythic days of yore;
They gave Columbus courage; they sped Pizarro's keel,
Before the leagues were lessened by cleaving bows of steel.

Their House is arched with azure and carpeted by green,
And curtained are its casements by sunlit damascene;
'Tis floored by Seven Oceans, whose level surface rolls
From wainscot of wide places through doorways of the Poles.

Their never-silent Voices shall e'er authentic be;
The songs they sang to Homer they sing to you and me;
Across the red Sahara or through the waving corn;
At Sydney in the sunset, by Samos in the morn.

They wailed o'er Alexander, and lone and tragic cried
On stormy St. Helena, the night Napoleon died ;
So fey they are, so gay they are, whose constant songs are sung,
In tunes of ev'ry Music, in words of ev'ry tongue.

We hear them in our cradles, and when the shadows fall,
Their Message of Departure these fateful Harpers call :
A rose song in the morning, at noon a wild delight,
But low among the cypress the Four Winds toll at Night.

They played in purple Baalbec among the brown slave's curls,
They whispered lovers' greetings to swart Assyrian girls ;
They walked before the Pharaohs ; they rode with Sheba's pride,
And by the car of Caesar, and Tamerlane beside.

They dwelled amid the splendour and panoply of Rome ;
They bore the Norman over and led the Vikings home ;
They lured the Norse to Greenland, they led the Moors to Spain ;
They sped the knights of Cortez a-down the Western Main.

And don and devil dared them, and greasy traders
prayed ;
And priests and pirates clamoured their mercies
or their aid.
They slew the strong Armada, and answered to
the quest
Of martyrs, rogues and rovers who journeyed
South and West.

Though now a Fleet of Iron their olden function
fills.
No field shall fruit without them, without them
no man tills ;
With rain they gladden gardens, in sweetness
keep the sea,
Till Time's long Epic endeth, and Men no more
may be.

So olden be, yet golden be, these Singers aye unseen,
Who shout above the thunder, who whisper songs
serene ;
Who walk this planet's pathways, with fruit-
fulness behind,
Who sweeps the House Terrestrial with besoms
of the Wind.

E. J. Brady

MY MOTHER

My mother had the fairest face.
So sweet and yet so sad.
So kind and good, with tender grace,
The face my mother had.

My mother had the nicest hair,
Of brown and gleaming gold,
A silver thread shone here and there—
Of care a story told.

My mother had the softest eyes—
Such eyes of deepest grey.
They watched for me, when dark the skies;
They watched me, night and day.

My mother had the sweetest tones
For me, if I should weep,
They smoothed all my baby moans,
And lulled me to my sleep.

I never saw my mother's face,
So sweet and yet so sad.
I never knew what good, what grace,
The face my mother had.

I never saw my mother's eyes,
Or hair, with golden gleams,
I never heard my mother's sighs,
Save only in my dreams.

Patrick Joseph Browne

AT THE PANTOMIME

I WONDER, will ever I dream them again—
The old, old dreams ?
I wonder, will ever the huntsman come,
To lead his lady tenderly home
From the perilous plain ;
And Little Boy Blue—will he come with his horn,
Winding gaily across the corn,
Over the seven streams,
The little star-swept streams ?

I wonder, is Robin Hood dead to-day
In the low-lit greenery ?
Or is he for long, long years but hiding,
Waiting the call that shall bring him riding,
Riding out of the grey ?
I wonder will ever the dear to-morrow
Lay her light hand on the pulse of Sorrow,
Soothe her and set her free
From sore captivity ?

O troubled waters ! O broken song !
O phantasy vain !
For questing Childhood is lost for ever,
In year-locked hills where a foot fall never,
Afar from Right and Wrong.
Then come, little dreams, from trancèd steep,
With light-winged music above my sleep,
And let me wonder again,
And wander once again.

Thomas Burke

WEST INDIA DOCK ROAD

Black man—white man—brown man—yellow man—
All the lousy Orient loafing on the quay :
Hindoo, Dago, Jap, Malay, and Chinaman,
Dipping into London from the great green sea !

Black man—white man—brown man—yellow man—
Pennyfields and Poplar and Chinatown for me !
Stately-moving cut-throats and many-coloured mysteries,
Never were such lusty things for London lads to see !

On the evil twilight—rose and star and silver—
Steals a song that long ago in Singapore they sang :
Fragrant of spices, of incense and opium,
Cinnamon and aconite, the betel and the bhang.

Three miles straight lies lily-clad Belgravia,
Thin-lipped ladies and padded men and pale.
But here are turbaned princes and velvet-glancing gentlemen,
Tom-tom and sharp knife and salt-caked sail.

Then get you down to Limehouse, by rigging, wharf, and smoke-stack,
Glamour, dirt, and perfume, and dusky men and gold;
For down in lurking Limehouse there's the blue moon of the Orient—
Lamps for young Aladdins, and bowies for the bold!

Thomas Burke

OUT OF WORK

An hulking man is on the road,
Whose shoulders do not bear a load,
Howbeit his back is mountains broad

A babe well thriven, a joy to see,
A woman small but sinewy,
For sure a perfect family.

The child rides in its little cart,
The giant plays a pygmy part,
And pushes it with little art.

The woman pulls in front the whiles,
Thus through the rain for miles and miles,
The baby's face is wreathed in smiles.

What though the cart is hard to thrust,
The wheels being stiff with dust or rust,
Yet keep on still your hope and trust,

Why? The child holds aloft a gamp,
And with one's infant for a lamp,
What do they matter, frost and damp?

Take courage, woman, baby lives;
Take courage, man, your baby thrives;
And some have neither babes nor wives.

Francis Burrows

VICTORY

THE Hated Dragon having slain,
And thus performed his highest hope,
The Knight returned across the plain,
And walked his horse upon the slope;
Whose strength and his were nearly stinted,
Their plumage cut, their armour dinted.

His gaze was fixed in front afar,
Or lay upon his horse's neck,
Which gloried in the spoils of war,
The Dragon's daughter and his wreck;
But not a word he thought or said,
He seemed a rider from the dead.

Then to his sword his dagger cried,
" You call me dwarfish and misshaped,
But neatly slipped I through his side,
Just spotting where the armour gaped,
And well did I deserve my drink ;
You cannot boast so much, I think."

The honest shield who used to judge
When either thought him to be wronged,
Nor ever would of honour grudge
To whom it rightfully belonged,
Awoke and shivered at the screaming,
But passed it and continued dreaming.

Francis Burrows

THE POOLS-OF-PEACE

The little Pools-of-Peace lie far
From dusty ways of noon,
Along the winding paths of sleep
To where the hills of twilight keep
The gardens of the Moon.

When night comes softly down the sky
And lights each waiting star,
The minstrels of the Moon play low
For dancing feet of winds that go
To those still pools afar.

The little Winds-of-Dream go swift
And scatter with light hands
The Dust-of-Dreams to seal the sight
Of those who weary of the light,
And seek for Elfin lands.

O follow then the little winds
Along those shadowy ways,
And find the Pools-of-Peace that lie
So fair beneath the dreaming sky,
So far from dusty days.

Joan Campbell

LOVE IN AUGUST

Love in April : see the spinning
Bubbles wink and froth and leap,—
Much too light a wine for binning,
Not the kind that pays to keep ;
Love in April's lass and lad stuff,—
Nectar when you're not grown up,
But, to seasoned palates, sad stuff
Only fit for ballroom cup !

Love in June : a wine to study,
So the tasters say, but young,
Raw and rasping, big and ruddy,
Lying fiery on the tongue ;
Wine to buy, say they, and one with
Quite a promise, given care,
Yet I claim, when all is done with,
Love in June's still *ordinaire* !

Love in August : grand and mellow,
Rare and soft with Time a-wing,—
Love in August has no fellow
In the cellars of a king ;
Gold of all the summer's mintage
Lingers whilst our goblets clink,—
Love in August's of the vintage,
Love in August's fit to drink !

Patrick R. Chalmers

IN LONDON

Now upon the window-sills
There are yellow daffodils,
There's tulip and there's hyacinth each tasteful box adorning ;
And our street, at times old-maidy,
Looks a gaily gowned young lady,
So dainty and so *débutante* all on an April morning !

Blue and white is all the sky,
And the clouds are driving high,
(Around each windy corner how the whistling gusts go shrilly !)
And the square is full of cooing,
For the wood-pigeons are wooing,
And there's sunshine on the pavement all the way to Piccadilly !

See the sparrows wag their tails
On the newly painted rails,
Or they flutter at their nesting very fussy, very faddy,
There are motors smoothly humming,
And there's fifing and there's drumming,
When the Guards go by to barracks to the lilting "Hielan' Laddie!"

On the plane-tree's budding bough
There's the thrush who tells us how
He has found in spite of stucco that the city sap is springing,
Tells us how to note the blisses
Of a morning such as this is,
And how April means adventure, and how youth must go a-flinging!

Yes, he tells us that it is
Just the day for Odysseys,
"There's magic out this morning," says the thrush, "A man can well see!"
And the grass is green and growing,
And the winds of Spring are blowing,
The sky is blue at Charing Cross, the river's blue at Chelsea!

Patrick R. Chalmers

THE PIPER

LAST night in the wood an old piper went by,
And he twittered a tune on his reeds,
And the planets, to hear him, stood still in the sky,
And the wood-flowers awoke on the meads.

The moon floated up, like a bubble of gold,
And the wood was all silver and jade;
She'd heard of the piper, by field and by fold,
Since she was a slip of a maid:

With his thin, little piping, he went as he came,
With a thin, little echo behind;
But the tune of the piper had never a name;
T'was the Earth and the Stars and the Wind.

Patrick R. Chalmers

THE BALLAD OF OTMOOR

A KING'S daughter came riding by,
Riding by, riding by,
A King's daughter came riding by
Under the simple arch of the sky,
Over the marsh of Otmoor.

Bells were round her horse's neck,
Her horse's neck, her horse's neck,
Bells were round her horse's neck;
On May Day morning came she by,
Riding over Otmoor.

Her feet were shod with silver and gold,
With silver and gold, with silver and gold,
She was crowned with silver and girt with gold
Upon the marsh of Otmoor.

Her robes were dyed in the scarlet's red,
In the scarlet's red, in the scarlet's red,
Blue were her eyes and her robes were red
At dawn on Wednesday morning.

As she came by past Charlton tower,
Past Charlton tower, past Charlton tower,
The fair dawn opened like a flower,
A flower on Wednesday morning.

The smell of the dawn was the smell of a rose,
The scent of a rose, the soul of a rose,
The smell of the dawn was the smell of a rose,
As it opened over Otmoor.

The bells in Charlton tower rang high,
The bells rang high, the bells rang high,
And her horse's bells, as she rode by,
Over the marsh of Otmoor.

The people of Charlton knelt in the street,
Low in the street, low in the street,
They bowed at the sound of her horse's feet,
They bent and bowed in the midst of the street,
At dawn on Wednesday morning.

She smiled upon them and rode away,
    She rode away, she rode away,
She smiled upon them and galloped away,
Into the blossoming birth of the day,
    At dawn on Wednesday morning.

W. R. Childe

THE BELLS OF TOURNAY

When I was young in Tournay town,
The sunset light was bright as a crown,
The red and the tawny sails went down,
From Tournay to the sea ;
The water flowed in the broad canal,
The bells rang out for a festival,
The cathedral chimes rang loudest of all,
There were bells in the heart of me.

Over the steep red roofs on the hill,
Great glittering clouds were abiding still,
And a powerful glorious peace did fill
The mind and heart of me ;
The old men sate by the water-side,
The babies laughed and tumbled and cried,
The trees in their emerald April pride,
Were rustling tenderly.

Let me see when I come to die,
The minster's towers and the flaming sky,
For my soul knew immortality,
When life was rich to me ;
When I walked in youth's exulting pride,
And a friend walked on either side,
And the coloured sails went down the tide
From Tournay to the sea!

O sacred bells of the Flanders town,
O sunlit barges sailing down,
O glittering cloud bright as a crown,
O youth in the heart of me !
I shall grow old as men grow old,
But my heart shall never be mean and cold,
If I never forget that hour of gold,
And the spring and its greenery !

W. R. Childe

THE HAREBELL

A SUBTLE song of elfin things,
She flutes the long, blue afternoon,
A sound of sweet imaginings,
A tune linked to another tune :
Upon the water-haunted moors
Nodding, she opens sapphire doors,
That bar the other land from me,
The lamp-lit leas of faëry.

She shakes her windy bells to the sun,
  With tremblings and divine despairs,
Beholding antic fairies run
  Upon the silence of the airs :
For her the opal moon uplifts
A torch above the misty drifts :
Upon the upland gardens drawn,
She sees the pomps of eve and dawn

Yea, there are many things she sees,
  Which tongue of man can never tell :
For there are visions in the trees,
  That echo to her ringing bell,
And in bare pools, when on the hill
The yellow morning settles still,
The faces that she sees therein
Know nought of any mortal sin.

She is the spirit of the wild,
  A player of fantastic lutes,
A mountain-girl, an upland-child,
  Born where the song of silence flutes :
Lo, if thou darest to kiss her lips,
At midnight, in the moon's eclipse,
Then sapphire doors shall open thee
The lamp-lit leas of faëry.

W. R. Childe

IN THE TRAIN

The little farms, the pale canals,
  The plains of living green,
The tender flood of light that falls
  Across the silent scene,
The silver rows of fluttering trees,
  That shake their trembling crowns,
The dark ponds' placid mysteries,
  The spired and gabled towns,
The people moving in the fields,
  The rippling chime of bells :
All this a tender magic yields,
  And blossoms into spells,
All this becomes a world of dreams,
  Where I shall walk and play,
A little land of stainless streams,
  A vast eternal day,
A coloured garden filled with souls,
  A house of heavenly rooms . . .
But now the cruel engine rolls
  Back into roaring glooms.

W. R. Childe

THE STAR

When every last goodnight is said,
And I am safe tucked up in bed,
I see a darling little star
Which twinkles gaily from afar.

I buff my pillow 'neath my head,
And lie and watch it from my bed,
And wonder what it does up there,
And if it's angry when I stare.
So happy and content it seems ;
And once I met it in my dreams,
Right up into the sky I walked,
And with my little star I talked.
It said : " I'm going to explain,
Try never to forget again.—
We stars are little eyes of God,
And when with sleep the children nod,
His Hand is swept across the sky
And opens every little eye,
And while the sun his rest does take,
Each eye of God is wide awake
To guard the children as they sleep,
And at their rosy faces peep."—
And then I dreamt that with a bump
I fell, and woke with such a jump,
To find I wasn't really dead,
But cosy in my little bed,
The sunshine streaming on the floor,
And some-one knocking at the door.

Itys Christie

THE FOX-CUB SPEAKS

The Fox-cub speaks :

" WHAT is the sound, little brother,
That rings thro' the early air ? "
" Oh, that is the call of the farmer-lads

As the last of the sheaves they bear,
And they sing 'mid the dewy golden grain
And laugh and make merry there."
But the old fox said: "That's the huntsman's call,
Take care!"
"What is the gleam, little brother,
Showing white in the meadow there?"
"Oh, the children gather the bramble fruit,
And fill the pails they bear,
And they dance, white-clad, 'mong the crimsoning leaves,
Or the purple beauty share."
But the old fox said: "That's the glint of hounds,
Beware!"
"What is the rustle, brother,
That creeps thro' the covert there?"
"Oh, the scent-soaked early morning breeze,
Is stirring the bracken where
The green turns bronze—quick! little brother,
We'd best get back to our lair!"
And the old fox he said nothing, for he
Wasn't there.

Hylda C. Cole

LEWES GAOL

STAND here on the downs, the downs that are free—
Fragrant and free they slope upward and fall;
Can you imagine what you would see
Over the wall?

The wind here has traversed the country—you hear it—
Gathered its fragrance and carried it all
Hither to greet you, unable to bear it
Over the wall.

Here the birds sweep and the landscape is blotless ;
Sea-gulls come hither, veer upward and call ;
Does the sound carry ? Is the sky spotless
Over the wall ?

Over the wall do they think in this fashion,
Dream of this view as the days onward crawl,
Till dead are ambition and mem'ry and passion
Over the wall ?

Do they wake in the morning and smell the sweet clover,
Look up and wonder and madden and fall ?
O wind ! O breather of Life ! Reach over,
Over the Wall !

Mortals who call themselves free in their prison,
Their prison of earth, so wide and so small,
Are they not manacled till they have risen
Over the wall ?

Rupert Croft-Cooke

BINKIE AND PETER AND ME

We've nothing to say to the deaf and the blind,
And the people who live in towns ;
For the secrets told by the whispering wind,
That talks upon the downs,
Cannot be told to craven folk,
Ever afraid to be free ;
But thus and thus the west wind spoke
To Binkie and Peter and me.

If you follow the path as far as it goes,
Up from St. Vennan's Bay,
Till you come to the place where the wild thyme grows,
And the sheep-track dies away ;
You come in time to the Wonderful Land,
That lies by the Fairy Sea . . .
And thus and thus did we understand,—
Binkie and Peter and me.

In the morning we leave the house and climb
Over the wavy hills,
And meet the wind that waits by the thyme,
And do what ever he wills ;
For he takes us and shows us most marvellous things
As ever a man may see ;
And we've talked with Princes and talked with Kings—
Binkie and Peter and me.

We came to the shore one summer day
And lay upon the sand,
When a boat rode in through the silver spray
And brought a man to land:
He sprawled on the beach and told to us
Stories of Thessaly . . .
And thus we talked with Herodotus,—
Binkie and Peter and me.

And once we met an aged man,
Who harboured malice still,
Against a god of the name of Pan,
Who lured him to some ill:
He told us his name was Marsyas,
A musical critic; but we
Thought the fellow no end of an ass,—
Binkie and Peter and me.

Once when the friendly skies were dark,
And the hills were cloaked in fog,
Suddenly Binkie began to bark;
(Binkie's no fool of a dog!)
But really there was nothing to fear,
Though the man wore pistols three,
And we had lunch with a buccaneer,—
Binkie and Peter and me.

We met an old man once who said
How love and life were vain;
And Peter got angry and lost his head,
And would not talk again;

But we never guessed until he had gone
And we'd got back to tea,
That we had been rude to Solomon,—
Binkie, and Peter and me.

We bring no word for your bazaars :
Your shame, your gain, your toil ;
We are but born of the seas and stars ;
God-children of the soil ;
We have no part in your distress,
No thought for your degree.
And we make no bargain with Happiness,—
Binkie and Peter and me.

Norman Davey

THE HOUSE

A GRASSY bluff, sheltered against the hill
From unkind winds ; and southward to the sea
Free to the summer breezes' playful will
And target to the sun's bright armoury.

Upon this grassy slope your house was built ;
A fairy lodge within enchanted ground ;
At even by the dying sunlight gilt,
And by the stars at midnight silvered round.

A wall of lichened stone : a house of wood :
A pony in a field with daises starred ;
A twisty path with shells and shingle strewed :
Two wooden gate posts, rotting, stained and scarred.

A terraced lawn where dandelions grew :
A bank with scarlet poppies all a-flame ;
A tousled hedge of tamarisk that threw
Long shadows on the grass when evening came.

The pony who among the daisies stood,
Was old, I think, and very, very wise ;
And did no work, but searched your clothes for food,
And watched the passing mood in your grey eyes.

And here I think with your most quiet mind,
You won much patient service to your wish :
The sea-fowl, hovering on the inshore wind ;
And in the rock-ringed pools, the scaly fish.

Safe in its wattled home, the timorous hare,
Quaking at unknown sounds and sudden sway
Of grasses in the still, untroubled air,
Not at your footsteps rose and ran away.

To you did pastured beeves allegiance own ;
And where the cliff-stream ran through flowery meads,
To you Titania bequeathed her throne,
And Puck his forest lore and Pan his reeds.

And sometimes you would leave your house at dawn,
And through the misty landscape wander on ;
While yet the dewdrops strung with gems your lawn :
While yet the woods in Ruan hid the sun.

Till climbing up to where Polfechau reared,
Its granite mass towards the dying stars,
You waited till the round red sun appeared,
And bound the outgoing tide with golden bars.

Sometimes on summer nights you stole away
Into the quiet dark, gracious and cool,
And on the cliff-edge, gazing downward, lay
Counting the stars drowned in St. Swithin's Pool.

To fish them out with ladles made from leaves,
And sell them to the gnomes you knew by name :
Lion and Honey Dew and Spindle Sheaves,
Briar and Will o' Wisp and Candle Flame.

Your house, I know, was guarded well by elves,
And little gossip winds that told you tales,
While fairy merchants loaded up your shelves
With magic stuffs in cobweb-corded bales.

Here, in your house, our sorrow found no place ;
For happy are the fields, the skies, the seas :
You saw but laughter in Puck's wizened face,
And Pan veiled not your eyes with mysteries.

And now your house is bare and void of you ;
Thither, no longer on a summer's eve
King Oberon returns to visit you,
O Lady of the Land of Make Believe !

Doubtless beyond some far and starry track
You wait Queen Mab on an enchanted main,
Yet though to your own place you may come back,
I shall not ever see your house again.

Norman Davey

THE CHILDREN'S SPRING SONG

Come with us, and we will lead you
Where the kingcup-lamps are gleaming.
Come with us, and we will speed you
To the windflowers' silver-dreaming.
We know where the blackbird nested
(We have heard her foolish chiding).
We have seen King-wren, gold-crested,
In his moss-built palace hiding.
Come with us, for we can tell you
Where the painted orchids grow.
All Spring's secrets we can spell you,
For we tracked her, and we know.
Come with us, our footsteps follow
Through the folded meadow-lands,
Powdered thick o'er swell and hollow
With the dancing cowslip-bands ;

All their fragrant tassels shaking
Down the sun-warm fields they flock,
Golden keys hung for our taking
April's casket to unlock.
Come with us, and we will show you
Where the misted bluebells spread ;
Bluebell-seas to overflow you ;
Bluebell-lakes to cool your tread.
Where the wild bee sips her chalice,
Swinging o'er that honeyed tide,
To Spring's azure-moated palace
Let the children be your guide.

Eva Dobell

THE OPEN ROAD

O ! THE wind's awake, roaming down and brake,
And the road's swept hard and clean ;
There's a world so wide stretching either side,
To a frost-starred edge of green ;
There's a goal to win ere the sun goes in,
And the day and the impulse die ;
And it's O ! but three jolly mates we'll be,
The wind and my heart and I !

O ! the ferrule's ring and the rhythmic swing
Of my step and my stick in time,
As the views unroll round my joyous soul,
And my thoughts and my pulses rhyme !

What's a bracing score of sweet miles, or more,
When you've bidden the town good-bye ?
You should hear us shout all the gladness out,
The wind and my heart and I.

* * * * *

Shines an evening star o'er a roof afar,
And a lamp in the dusk burns gold ;
O ! the home-way's sweet to conquering feet,
As the arms of the night unfold ;
And the wind has spent all its wild intent,
And breathes but a happy sigh ;
For we're going to rest where our joys dream best,
The wind and my heart and I.

May Doney

RUTH

" She stands breast high amid the corn "—
The harvest of her love and tears
And every pain her soul has borne
Through the fulfilling years.

She stoops amid the golden wealth
That drops around her patient feet,
Gathering her suffering and her health—
Her spirit's ripened wheat.

She gleans, unwearied evermore,
The great ears of her joy and grief,
And binds the wonders of her store
Into a little sheaf.

Bruising the grain of all she is,
She kneads a little loaf of bread,
Mingling her life's strange mysteries—
Loins, bosom, heart and head.

And then upon herself she feeds
The life she loves, the lives she bears,
Breaking her passion for their needs,
Her pity for their cares.

So, through her days' allotted span,
She yields and binds and spends her truth ;
The woman God has given to man—
The everlasting Ruth.

May Doney

THE BROOK ALONG THE ROMSEY ROAD

The brook along the Romsey road
With cresses fringed about,
Holds waving fins and streaming weeds
And bubbles bright as crystal beads,
And root-bound reaches whither speeds,
Startled, the shadowy trout.

As southward runs the Romsey road,
The sunny wind blows harsh,
With yellow shale and whirling sands,
That sting the faces and the hands
Of us who leave the wooded lands,
Of pleasant Michelmarsh.

Where southward runs the Romsey road,
Southward lagged Betsey-Jane ;
Clutching my hand, and still the grit
Lay round between our fingers, it
Smarted on Betsey's face and knit
Her little brows with pain.

A bend was in the Romsey road,
Shut off by elms the wind
Was stilled, below a bridge the brook
Came dimpling forth, and Betsey shook
Her fingers free and ran to look,—
I held her frock behind.

On the far shore a wag-tail dipped
His beak,—we gazed below,
And Betsey was content to stand
And see the trout and hold my hand,
And watch them wave about the sand,
Until we turned to go.

The brook along the Romsey road,
With cresses fringed about,
Ran all day long in Betsey's head
She played at wag-tails while she fed,
And even as she went to bed
She babbled of the trout.

Helen Parry Eden

A SONG IN A LANE

When the wind comes up the lane
And you go down—
The elms their specious branches swing,
The hidden hedgelings sing and sing,
The nettle draws aside his sting,
And kindly weeds their shadows fling
Across your sunny gown ;—
When the wind comes up the lane
And you go down.

When the wind comes up the lane
And you go down—
Your tresses, for a gusty space,
Discover all your merry face,
And the wind drops with pinioned grace
To kiss the small white forehead place
Above your summer brown ;—
When the wind comes up the lane
And you go down.

Helen Parry Eden

PETER PIGEON

The pigeons dwell in Pimlico ; they mingle in the street ;
They flutter at Victoria around the horses' feet ;
They fly to meet the royal trains with many a loyal phrase,
And strut to meet their sovereign on strips of scarlet baize ;
But Peter, Peter Pigeon, salutes his cradle days.

The pigeons build in Bloomsbury ; they rear their
classic homes,
Where pedants clamber sable steps to search
forgotten tomes ;
They haunt Ionic capitals with learned lullabies,
And each laments in anapaests and in iambics
cries ;
But Peter, Peter Pigeon, how sleepily he sighs !

The pigeons walk the Guildhall ; they dress in
civic taste,
With amplitude of mayoral chain and alder-
manic waist ;
They bow their grey emphatic heads, their top-
knots rise and fall,
They cluster in the court-yard at their midday
dinner call ;
But Peter, Peter Pigeon, he nods beneath my shawl.

The pigeons brood in Battersea ; while yet the
dawn is dark ;
Their ready aubade ripples in the plane-trees round
the park ;
They light upon your balcony, a brave and comely
band,
Till night decoys their coral feet, their voices low
and bland ;
But Peter, Peter Pigeon, his feet are in my hand.

Helen Parry Eden

AN UPLAND STATION

O THE trucks that leave Southampton bring a
smell of twine and tar,
And fishy like the ashpalt ways that front the
glittering bar,
And they steam into the station where the laurel
bushes are ;

And the trucks be wet and slippery, as sea-weed on
the rocks,
With their cumbrous coils of cordage from the
ships beside the docks,
And they creak along the platform like the clank
of ogres' locks.

What send we to Southampton for our upland
valley's freight ?
Comes a band of armoured milk-cans through the
level-crossing's gate,
And cabbages with leaves a-curl and sprouting
through the crate.

And ducklings in a wicker coop and gilly-flowers
to fall
Dusty-petalled in a bucket under some Southamp-
ton stall,
And sons who sail the 'Meriky, and bid good-bye
to all.

Then it's " Forward for Southampton ! " They are
gone and we turn back,
Past the river and the orchard and the warm
dishevelled stack,
And again the silent barriers are swung across
the track ;

Again the platform is at peace, the idle metals
shine,
And the tendrils are untroubled on the station-
master's vine,
And the sun is on the laurels and the sparrows on
the line.

Helen Parry Eden

LUGETE O VENERES CUPIDINESQUE

Now that my little dog is dead,
The endless winds blow over his head,
And he is very far, alone,
From the men and towns that were his own.

In Berkshire woods he should have lain,
In pinewoods whispering with the rain,
Or by his dear pool clear and deep,
In Berkshire slept his endless sleep.

So might I stand and think again
Of our long rambles in the rain,
Or call for him to come to me
Across the woods by Eversley.

Now that my little dog is dead,
There are three poplars at his head,
And he is lying very still
Under a meadow on a hill.

I can see him lying—three foot deep—
He is sleeping now as he used to sleep,
He is lying now as he used to lie
With his four paws stretched so patiently,

Waiting for some clear summer dawning,
And for my whistle in the morning.
But the man he loved is far away,
And his night ends not in any day.

The endless winds above him sing,
With pattering rain at evening ;
He is dwindling to a skeleton,
My dainty one, my lovely one.

Sleep well, Mick, by your poplar-trees,
Sleep on, fear nothing, be at ease.
Somewhere, somehow we'll meet again
And go long rambles in the rain.

Godfrey Elton

NEWS

THEY came, you know, and told me you were dead,
Those little men who never dreamed of pain.
" There's not much racing news to-day," I said.
I said, " I hope it will be fine again."
And then, I think, I climbed a certain hill,
And saw two plough-shares and a rusty bin,
And further on, beyond John Farmer's mill,
A fence in which five rails had fallen in,
But sixty-two I counted upright still.
And all the time my feet were saying " dead,"
Beating it slowly, beating through my head.

I saw it all. I saw the little room
In which, they said, they laid you ; to and fro
I heard the creeper rustling, and the boom
Of some old hornet on the lawns below.
I saw " The Star of Evening " by the door,
And, though I struggled hard, my eye was drawn
On past those old red ink stains on the floor,
On past the table, and " The Wounded Fawn ",
To that bright hair . . .
No, I was wrong before.
Look at those railings, there are sixty-three,
I missed the one beyond laburnum tree.

Godfrey Elton.

THE INTERVIEW

I

Down in the darkness to the coast
I ran on passionate feet
To greet the friend I loved the most
And hungered most to meet,
To hail the friend my heart had lost
And hear its surges beat.

Moon, there was none ; the sky was blank ;
All I could see was black ;
Save where the breakers, rank on rank,
Rose up for the attack ;
Save where the lion heaved his flank,
And roared, and shuddered back.

Yet there it lay, the same, the old,
The indomitable Sea,
There in the darkness and the cold
Crying continually.
Crying the storm its caverns hold,
As my heart cried to me.

The souls of all heroic men,
Who in the Sea have found
A comrade and a God, and then
Beneath its waves been drowned,
Lusty and loud and proud again
Made chorus to the sound.

They had no shapes that I could see,
Riding the murky air,
And yet I know that actually
Each soul of them was there,
And I was with them, and could be,
Bodiless, as they were.

II

Even as the particles of brine,
Beating this actual coast,
Millions on millions, line on line,
Are an unnumbered host,
Yet in their multitudes enshrine
As many fates almost.

This drop beneath a torrid sun,
Caressed the isles of spice ;
In polar night that other one,
Welded the Arctic ice ;
And this was whirled to spray upon
An Alpine precipice.

That drop a Viking dragon sank ;
That, a Malay canoe ;
And this a drowning Spaniard drank,
Gold-laden from Peru ;
And that upon the Syrtes bank
Had bleached a Roman crew.

The souls of lovers cannot be
Far from the love they willed ;
The murderer can never flee
Spirits whose life he spilled ;
And there were men that loved the Sea,
And whom the Sea had killed.

Therefore the spirits of them all
Were gathered like a cloud,
Millions on millions, and their call
Was jubilant and loud,
The song of men that met their fall
Whole-hearted and unbowed.

III

They sang the Sea, the living Sea,
Its praises and its pride,
Its beauty and its purity,
Its life's immortal tide,
And how they loved it quenchlessly,
Although by it they died.

They sang ; and in their glorious choir
The deity of man
Blazed and was manifest like fire,
That soared aloft and ran
Catching me with it, higher, higher,
Strong and Olympian.

They sang ; and in an undertone
Mysterious and intense
The sea made answer : first a moan,
Almost too low for sense ;
Then gathering loud, and louder grown,
Thundered omnipotence.

In giant eddies roared the sound ;
The singing swirled between ;
The voices of the men were drowned,
Even as the men had been ;
Yet did not lose themselves, but found
A stronger self therein.

Their tumult towered to the sky,
So that the awful void
Tingled for ecstasy ; and I,
Upon their pinions buoyed,
Groped out, and compassed the Most High,
One moment, overjoyed.

R. C. K. Ensor

THE STONE-BREAKER

The wind blows cold by Dortray's mill,
And cold on churchyard bones ;
But colder yet on Ember Hill,
Where Inskip breaks the stones.

He gathers them from lonely fields,
Where, high upon the ridge,
Some farmer in some former scheme
Of barren acreage

Ploughed up the virgin springy turf,
To learn by anxious toil
You cannot grow a generous crop
On unproductive soil.

That dense sweet turf, those unpeaked hills,
So famous for their flocks,
Are rarely tilled, though Inskip reaps
His harvest of the rocks.

He seldom meets a face except
His own in dew-pan glass,
Or shepherd's with his panting dog
Alert upon the grass.

From Petersfield to Beachy Head
There is no dwelling-place
Other than Inskip's humble shed,
That could those crests deface.

White clouds or cawing rooks that pass,
Affect him, if at all,
As little as they do the grass
Whereon their shadows fall.

He never wonders why or how,
Or looks beyond his lot,
Or meditates " If I were King,"
Or acts what he is not.

He sleeps without a dream at night ;
Works hard for little wage,
And builds his flints to that stick's height,
His master's casual gauge.

Sometimes he comes on arrow-heads—
His master pays for those ;
Though just precisely what they are
Old Inskip hardly knows.

And yet some man who shaped such flints
As none could now alive,
Through countless generations gone,
May still in him survive.

Or is it blood of ancient Tyre,
Or cities lost in sand,
Passed on through ages of desire,
That throbs in Inskip's hand.

As here in rugged shape he stands,
One man against the sky—
The stone-breaker on Ember Hill,
Who asks not how or why ?

Profound the peace in which he dwells,
Of stillness immanent ;
So smooth, so rounded are those downs
As lives that are content.

A. Hugh Fisher

THE TRAITOR

" *What is it makes the King's heart sore ?* "
" Ask of the huntsman at the door,"
Whispered the rushes on the floor.

" *Huntsman, what is it ails the king ?* "
" He learned but now of a cursèd thing,
And bade me wait for his wayfaring."

" *Why rides the king to-night so late ?* "
The forest murmured, " Love and hate,
Move men of high and low estate."

" *Why wakes Earl Athol with face so worn ?* "
" 'Tis the silver sound of that winding horn,"
Quoth the arras gray in early morn.

" *What was the secret he now has told ?* "
" How love once made him over bold
To cheat his king," said cup of gold.

" He was sent to learn at her father's hall
If the tales of her beauty were true at all,"
Sang a harp upon the wall.

" And sly carl told with a cunning knack
She'd a comely face, but a crooked back,
We know," cried the chessmen, white and black.

" *But what is it now he bids his wife ?* "
" Disguise her beauty and save his life,"
Said a bowl of stain with nut-husks ripe.

" *Why burns such fire in the lady's eyes ?* "
" The heart's wrath flames when the heart's
love dies,"
Wailed the trodden threads of her broideries.

" *Why does she run to her wedding-chest ?* "
" To seek what dresses array her best,"
Answered a brooch on her heaving breast.

" *Keeps the king silence while she bears*
Bread and meat for the travellers ? "
" He sees and plans," said the ashwood spears.

" *Where go these two with hidden hate*
As if they were still affectionate ? "
" The king commands," creaked rusty gate.

" *Go they to hunt as huntsmen should ?* "
" Yea, hunt if the king deem hunting good—
Perhaps each other," sighed Wherwell Wood.

" *Which of the two the fight will win,*
The man of right or the man of sin ? "
" The King," cried sharp-ground javelin.

" *Why rides he back to Athol's tower ?* "
" To snatch a widow from her bower,"
Laughed shaken thorn-tree's snow-white shower.

" *On the King's cheek why falls that tear ?* "
" Kings cannot conquer beauty ; here
He found her dead," replied the bier.

A. Hugh Fisher

ON IVINGHOE BEACON

The Beacon over Ivinghoe
Lifts up into the sky
A soaring shoulder out of earth
Where swift cloud-shadows fly,
And winds in the bent grasses make
A murmured ministrelsy.

There did we lie and watch at ease
The armies of the spring,
Across the winter-guarded vale
Their gallant outposts fling
By Amersham and Aylesbury,
By Wendover and Wing.

The Saxon and the Roman here
These winds and suns have felt,
And underneath this arch of sky
At this green altar knelt,
And the same night has gathered all,
The Roman, Saxon, Celt.

I saw your eyes turn strange, your lips
Were cold against my kiss,
And far behind your speech there dwelt
Strange wavering mysteries
—The painter legions of the dead
Spoke from their world to this—

And " Ah ! " you cried, " you cherish now
My beauty like a flower,
But how, when the soft graces fade,
The magic lights lose power,
And time that did my body build,
Unbuilds it hour by hour ?

" And you will, when deep winter chills
The season of desire,
And love, the tattered balladist,
Thrums on a ragged wire,
Past the grey hair and glazing eye,
Discern the hearted fire ? "

. . . . .

Alone I climb the Beacon now,
And watch the world outrolled,
The farms, the fields, the breadth of sky,
The wide unbroken wold,
And autumn's traitor banners hung
Above the woods of gold.

It was my fault that, in Love's wells
I troubled the clear springs,
And, looking in his burning eyes,
Recked little of his wings ;
And being but a mortal made,
Dreamed of immortal things.

Robin Flower

PAN WITH US

Pan came out of the woods one day,—
His skin and his hair and his eyes were gray,
The gray of the moss of walls were they,—
And stood in the sun and looked his fill
At wooded valley and wooded hill.

He stood in the zephyr, pipes in hand,
On a height of naked pasture land ;
In all the country he did command
He saw no smoke and he saw no roof
That was well ! and he stamped a hoof.

His heart knew peace, for none came here
To this lean feeding, save once a year,
Someone to salt the half-wild steer,
Or homespun children with clicking pails
Who see so little they tell no tales.

He tossed his pipes, too hard to teach
A new-world song, far out of reach,
For a sylvan sign that the blue jay's screech
And the whimper of hawks beside the sun
Were music enough for him, for one.

Times were changed from what they were :
Such pipes kept less of power to stir
The fruited bough of the juniper ;
And the fragile bluets clustered there
Than the merest aimless breath of air.

They were pipes of pagan mirth,
And the world had found new terms of worth.
He laid him down on the sun-burned earth,
And ravelled a flower and looked away—
Play ? Play ?—What should he play ?

Robert Frost

A DREAM SHIP

O, I wish I had a clipper ship with carvings on her
counter,
With lanterns on her poop-rail of beaten copper
wrought !
I'd dress her like a lady in the whitest cloth, and
mount her
With a long bow-chasing swivel and a gun at
every port.

I'd sign me on a master who had solved Mercator's
riddle,
A nigger cook with earrings who neither chewed
nor drank,
Who wore a red bandanna and was handy on the
fiddle ;
I'd take a piping bos'un, and a cabin-boy to
spank.

Then some clear summer morning, when the Fal-
mouth cocks were crowing,
I would set my capstan spinning to the chanting
of all hands,
And the milkmaids on the uplands would lament to
see me going,
As I beat for open Channel and away to foreign
lands.

Singing :

Fare ye well, O lady mine !
Fare ye well, my pretty one,
For the anchor's at the cat-head and the voyage is begun.
The wind is in the main sail, we're slipping from the land,
Hull-down and all sail making, close-hauled with the white-tops breaking,
Bound for the Rio Grande,
Fare ye well !

With the flying-fish around us and a porpoise school before us,
Full crowded under royals to the south'ard we would sweep.
We would hear the bull-whales blowing and the mermaids sing in chorus,
And, perhaps, the white seal mummies hum their chubby calves to sleep.

We would see the hot towns paddling in the surf of Spanish waters,
We would prowl beneath dim balconies and twang discreet guitars,
We would sigh our adoration to Don Juan's lovely daughters,
Till they lifted their mantillas and their dark eyes shone like stars.

We would cruise by fairy islands where the gaudy
parrot screeches,
And the turtle in his soup-tureen floats basking
in the calms ;
We would see the fireflies winking in the bush above
the beaches,
And a moon of honey-yellow drifting up behind
the palms.

We would crown ourselves with garlands, we would
tread a frolic measure
With the nut-brown island beauties in the fire-
light by the huts ;
We would give them rum and kisses ; we would
hunt for pirate treasure,
And bombard the apes with pebbles in exchange
for cocoanuts.

When we wearied of our wand'rings 'neath the
blazing southern heaven,
And dreamed of Kentish orchards fragrant-
scented after rain—
Of the cream there is in Cornwall, and the cider
brewed in Devon—
We would crowd our yards with canvas and
sweep foaming home again.

Singing :

Cheerily, O lady mine !
Cheerily, my sweetheart true,
For the blest Blue Peter's flying and I'm rolling home to you ;
For I'm tired of Spanish ladies and of tropic afterglows,
Heartsick for an English Spring-time, all afire for an English Ring-time,
In love with an English rose,
Rolling Home !

Crosbie Garstin

THE FIGURE HEAD

THERE was an ancient carver who fashioned a saint ;
But the parson wouldn't have it, so he took a pot of paint,
And changed its angel-garments for a dashing soldier-rig,
And said it was a figure-head and sold it to a brig.

The brig hauled her mainsail to an off-shore draught,
Then she shook her snowy royals and the Scillies went abaft,
And cloudy with the canvas she ran before the Trade,
Till she came to the Equator where she struck a merry-maid.

A string of pearls and conches were all of her togs,
But the porpoises and flying-fish they followed like her dogs ;
She had a voice of silver and lips of coral red ;
She climbed the dolphin-striker and kissed the figure head.

The captain wore his blue coat with buttons of brass ;
The mate he greased his forelock at the cabin looking-glass ;
The bos'un paced the fo-castle and coughed " Ah ha, ahem ! "—
But the merry-maid she turned her back and wouldn't look at them.

And every starry evening she'd swim in the foam
About the bows a-singing like a nightingale at home.
She'd call to him and sing to him as sweetly as a bird,
But the wooden-headed effigy he never said a word.

And every starry evening in the Doldrum calms,
She'd wriggle up the bob-stay and throw her tender arms
About his scarlet shoulders, and fondle him and cry,
And stroke his curly whiskers, but he never winked an eye.

She couldn't get an answer to her tears and moans,
So she went and told her daddy, told the ancient
Davy Jones.
Old Davy damned his eyesight, and puzzled of his
wits—
Then he whistled up his hurricanes and tore the
brig to bits.

Down on the ocean-bed, green fathoms deep,
Where the wrecks lie rotting and the great sea-
serpents creep,
In a gleaming grotto all built of sailors bones
Sits the handsome figure-head, listening to Miss
Jones.

Songs o' love she sings him the live-long day,
And she hangs upon his bosom and sobs the night
away,
But he never, never answers, for beneath his
soldier paint,
The wooden-headed lunatic still thinks that he's
a saint.

Crosbie Garstin

I LIKE THIS ROAD

I LIKE this road because he binds
The inland cities to the sea ;
Because he lifts their dusty minds
Up to what cleansing skies there be.

I like the way he turns and swings
And humps his shoulders to the heights,
Throwing about men's journeyings
An open wind of calm delights.

I like his bare and gallant grace,
His sufferance of sun and cloud,
Of swift cloud shadows on his face
And songs that small men pipe aloud.

I like his posied hedgerow hands,
Waving me welcome when I come ;
I like the rich and silent lands
That close about him like a home.

And oh, I like him after rain,
When every puddle fronts the sky
With a more lucent turquoise stain,
And birds and men go silently.

And when I've walked with him and sung,
And gone a day from care withdrawn,
I like to think—when night is hung,
Between the moonrise and the dawn—

What thought he has of men like me ;
Of vagabonds, and priests, and kings ;
Of women going wearily
With child ; and timid furry things ;

Great horses drawing merchandise ;
And men too old for summer's heat ;
Young maids that walk in lovers' eyes ;
Murderers ; and fools ; and all whose feet

Bind him with beauty round about—
What thought has he ? . . . when from the deep
Of night the stars look sharply out,
" Brothers," he says, and turns to sleep.

S. Barrington Gates

THE COUNTRY BOY

Ere Jack went up to London
He held his head full high :
His step was firm, his shoulders square,
And bright and bold his eye.

And ere he went to London,
Our maidens pleased him well,
As little Rose from Yeovil,
And dozens more, can tell.

But now the London ladies
Have stolen all his thoughts,
And wonderful rich presents
He gives to those he courts.

But O, the smile has left his lips,
His eyes are tired and dim,
And he's forgotten lads at home
Who've not forgotten him.

Douglas Goldring

WEST END LANE

Now through the dripping, moonless night,
Up West End lane and Frognal Rise,
They trace their footsteps by the light
Of love that fills their weary eyes.

" Nellie, though Town's a tiresome place,
With far less joy in it than tears,
To set my lips to your warm face
Is worth a sight of dismal years ! "

" And I'm so happy, Jack, with you,"
She whispers softly . . . " See, the rain
Has stopped, the clouds are broken through,
The stars are shining clear again ! "

Pausing, they gaze across the Heath
Submerged in fog—a dim hush'd lake,
Wherein the wretched might seek death,
And lovers drown for dear love's sake.

Then clasping hands, and touching lips,
They dream beneath great sombre trees,
Whence large and solemn falling drips
Are shaken by the restless breeze.

" Oh, nothing's half so sweet my dear,
As kisses in the quiet night !
Lean close, and let me hold you dear,
Put out your arms, and clasp me tight ! "

" Why should we wait, so cold and wise ?
We're only human, Nell, we two ;
And even if love fades and dies—
I shall remember this : won't you ? "

Douglas Goldring

THE HAPPY TREE

THERE was a bright and happy tree ;
The wind with music laced its boughs :
Thither across the houseless sea
Came singing birds to house.

Men grudged the tree its happy eves,
Its happy dawns of eager sound ;
So all that crown and tower of leaves
They levelled with the ground.

They made an upright of the stem,
A cross-piece of a bough they made :
No shadow of their deed on them
The fallen branches laid.

But blithely since the year was young,
When they a fitting hill did find,
There on the happy tree they hung
The Saviour of mankind.

Gerald Gould

INTO BATTLE

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees,
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying
And quivers in the sunny breeze ;

And Life in Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving ever more for these ;
And he is dead who will not fight ;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth ;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth ;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fulness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
  Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star and the Sisters Seven,
  Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
  They stand to him each one a friend ;
They gently speak in the windy weather ;
  They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
  And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
  As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
  If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another ;
  Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
  Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers ;
  O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burning moment breaks,
  And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy-of-Battle takes
  Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings ;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Julian Grenfell

GIVE ME BACK JUNE AGAIN

GIVE me back June again. I see November
Frosting the summer in your happy eyes,
When chilly principles would bid remember,
That all this carnal beauty fades and dies.

But here, content with what the Earth has given,
Why should I crave for aught the Future brings ?
I do not want a second Earth or Heaven ;
I want the old familiar much-loved things.

All the long drowsy summer nights and days :
The brown warm pastures, and the warm brown earth ;
That gleam of water shining through the haze
On upland pools :—the meadows and the heath :

The larks enraptured, springing, and the light
  Which strikes a million rainbows in the dew :
The hover-fly's inimitable flight
  O'er garden flowers which wait for me and you :

Just that white bell which opened with the day—
  (Last night we saw its petals closely furled!)
I will not own that time can bring decay,
  Or steal such beauty from a mourning world.

And where we walked together, you and I,
  And saw the white throat swinging from the thorn,—
A thousand ages hence shall hear her cry,
  And see us pause beside her on the lawn.

You frown as such presumption ? Dear, I know,
  (Bend to me, that one hour when first we met
Is it a minute or an age ago ?)
  Time has no meaning. We can not forget.

Is it November still ? Then one caress,
  A mere cheek's touching, brings me June again !
How the thought comes that Earth's least happiness,
  In passing leaves infinity of pain !

S. Reid-Heyman

BONDAGE

Once I was master of my days
  And dwelt amongst my books,
My heart was wholly undisturbed
  By love or women's looks ;

But since my mistress came to me,
  And held me in her thrall,
I, by her tyrannies, am ruled
  And have no will at all.

Yet 'neath the magic of her eyes,
  I half forget my pains ;
She has two dimples that can make
  Me smile and hug my chains,

And when she shakes her sunny curls,
  I cannot say her nay.
A whisper from her rosy lips
  Steals all my heart away,

And I am at the mercy
  Of all her wiles and tricks ;
But then I'm nearly sixty
  And she is only six.

Arthur Hunt

THE WHITE ROADS

The white roads of England are calling me away
To the woodlands and the meadows where the lambs are at play;
To the hills and the valleys and the farms grey and white,
Where the lark's song is welling from morning till night.

The white roads of England, they sing to me and say,
"Come with us a-roaming away and far away;
Away from the city where the stars never shine,
Where the skies are sadly weeping and the caged birds pine."

The white roads of England like ribbons are spread
Over heath and woodland, and the clouds overhead
Floating light as thistledown, gleam white as snow,
And the happy winds play with them and toss them to and fro.

The white roads of England are all a-thrill with song,
When wintry days are brief and chill, and summer days are long;
And there are mystic circles where the fairies dance at night,
Beside the roads that glimmer n'eath the moon's pure light.

The white roads of England are the best that I know,
To lead you to fairyland whichever way you go ;
You may take the wrong turning again and again,
But you'll find yourself at last in a cool, green lane :

Sit you down and rest awhile, and there shall you behold
All the happy fairy folk dancing on the wold ;
For the white roads of England are haunted night and day
By the kindly fairy people who are calling me away.

R. B. Ince

LONDON FAIRIES

Some say they only dance at dawn,
Or when the dusk is gray ;
But I have seen them revelling
In the broad light of day.

What ? Have you never seen them ?
Don't wait until it's dark—
Set out some early day in March
And wander in Hyde Park.

You'll find them there in white and gold,
In purple, green, and gray—
What we call rings of crocuses
Are fairies at their play.

Folks think that they are standing still,
But one who truly sees
Can glimpse their rainbow flitting feet
Under the quiet trees.

Folks think they grow there silently,
But one who truly hears
Will find faint fluting cadences
Breaking upon his ears.

They'll show themselves if you believe—
(And only if you do)—
Spend a Spring morning in the Park,
And then you'll know it's true.

Phyllis M. James

OCTOBER THE THIRTY-FIRST

I WANDERED deep in the woods
On this quiet Autumn day,
Wandered and mused, and breathed
The smell of the leafy clay,
Like incense burned in the woods.

I trod on fire in the woods,
On this quiet Autumn day—
Fire of ruddy leaves.
And under my feet they lay,
Like sunset spilled in the woods.

I robbed and stole in the woods,
On this quiet Autumn day,
Rifled red gold and gems,
And bore them with me away,
Like treasure found in the woods.

I brought them in from the woods,
On this quiet Autumn day :
Their golden royalty fled,
And there, in my house, they lay
Like dead things found in the woods.

I bore them back to the woods,
On this quiet Autumn day—
Brought them, and laid them there . . .
And I smelt the leafy clay
Like incense burned in the woods.

Phyllis M. James

FLOWERS

I

I TROD the field of Hope in the land of Desire,
And my feet were warm with the dauntless crocus-fire,
—Fire that the chaste snows quench not, and night's chill moon
Cannot cool ; and the ecstasy born of the tongues that aspire,
Soared to the father-flames of the untamed moon.

II

I walked through the wood of Content, where the pale primrose
Under the shadeless arbour of April grows,
And anemones fathered with squalls and mothered with calms,
Blossomed, till tender shades of the hazel rows
Veiled them asleep without plaint in the warm month's arms.

III

Lost in a maze of roses, I strove to thread
Passionate patriot banners of white and red,
And the fitful heart-blood of them glowed and froze,
—Froze with the horror and glowed with the honour that bled
Like a pattern of young lost life on the late-shed snows.

IV

On the sward in the rocks of a windless valley inwrought,
Dropped the red poppy and pined for the formless thought,
That should change her ruddy to pale, in the still cold bliss,
And the sleep without dream and the life that but lives and is nought,
Where Persephone reigns on the unsunned throne of Dis.

V

I climbed the hill of Humility, where the meek
Gentian jewelled the slopes, and a dazzling peak
Pointed for witness to Heaven that doubly dowers
With a portion of her own azure them that seek
To be least, and bless that brightness among the flowers.

VI

With a sudden surprise as I burst on a secret lawn,
Where Spring o'er her bosom a mantle of blue had drawn,
I asked: "Ah, who in the glory of all this glade
Is the loveliest?" Answered the bluebell, "Lo, as the dawn,
Each whelmed in the All, we come; as the eve we fade."

VII

I searched Love's lane, not ever a flower espied,
When under a shadowing leaf a wild violet cried
"I am poor, she is rich; I am scentless, but sweet is she.
Foolish the flowers that would rival her; I shall but hide
In her bosom and tell how you love,—Give her me. Give her me!"

Guy Kendall

PAVANE

O AUTHOR of Creation,
O primal fount of force,
For whom the rolling ages
Revolve their Titan course ;
Centre of countless circles,
Amid the many One,
From whom all things have motion,
Thyself unmoved alone !

Why pine for peace and stillness,
Which none but Thou possess ?
Divine rest is diviner
Through human restlessness.
Should we of all thy creatures,
Alone Thy lay deny ?
Stand mute and still before Thee,
Whilst Nature dances by ?

For Thee the veil of evening
Droops down in solemn fold ;
The outstretched arms of morning
Are faint with yellow gold.
The fir trees of the forest
Their fingers intertwine,
The stalks of stately Ceres
Their myriad heads incline.

What though we be but ashes,
  Or called from out the clay !
See when God's whirlwind raises
  The very dust to play !
While He in supplest sinew
  Delights to mould our dust ;
To-day we may be dancing,
  To-morrow rest we must.

Must then we bend our bodies
  Responsive unto Him,
Who quickened with His breathing
  The life of every limb.
Thou, Lord, our frame didst fashion
  After the form divine ;
Lo, to each other's image
  We bend and worship Thine !

Guy Kendall

A LEGEND OF OMAR KHAYYAM

Upon the river's bank one summer's day
Beneath a shady rose-tree sleeping lay
Omar the tent-maker ! Behold it seemed
To Omar that before him as he dreamed
A stately-pillared portico of gold
With carven gates of ivory unrolled,
Through which a maiden came in garb of white,
Girt with a jewelled girdle flashing light.

O'er her lithe body flowed her glorious hair,
Dark as the depths of dusky caverns are ;
A wreath of crimson roses crowned her head,
Her shoulders also were begarlanded,
In either hand a pomegranate she bore
And coming to the sleeper looked him o'er
With great sad eyes, then said " Lo ! I am sent
To thee, oh ! Omar, maker of the tent,
To bid thee choose which fruit thou wilt retain
To be thine own of these pomegranates twain.
The first is red and ripe, 'twill soonest die
And leave no seed behind it by and bye ;
Its name is ' Wealth.' This other green and sour,
Maturing slow, will ripen hour by hour
And lo ! its seed will spread o'er all the earth.
Its name is 'Poesy.' Which fruit is worth
The most to thee ? Now, Omar, think and choose."
Then Omar said " Oh ! maiden I refuse
The lure of ' Wealth,' " And from her finger-tips
Took ' Poesy.' She laid her lips to his
And Omar woke beneath her honied kiss
To find a rose-leaf fluttering from his lips.

Arthur Clark Kennedy

THE VIOLINIST

Upon the platform of a crowded hall
A single figure dominated the scene :
All eyes turn to him, where ungainly, tall,
He shambles forward, tucked beneath his chin
The gleaming body of his violin !

As the notes follow, stillness stiller grows
Along the rustling benches ; scarce a breath
But is suspended in those listening rows
Of pampered people who have come beneath
The spells of sound that round his person wreathe.

He sees them not. To his closed eyelids come
Far other scenes. A dying woman laid
On a rude pallet in a wretched home,
A very hovel ; and beside her bed
He stands once more as though she were not dead !

And every sobbing note entreats and prays
Cruel Death to stay his slowly-closing hand,
While the insistent wailing strain he plays
Tightens about each hearer's heart a band
Of unrestrained emotion, to expand.

In thunderous applause, when at the end,
And Death has conquered, he lays down his bow :
' Tis a relief to see the Master bend
Before his audience shrinkingly, as though
Each separate plaudit struck him like a blow.

Then in his heart a sudden fury leaps,
What are such triumphs worth ? She cannot know,
Where in her pauper's grave secure she sleeps ;
And scornful notes fall dripping from his bow,
The while his violin in accents loud
Pours out contempt on the applauding crowd.

Arthur Clark Kennedy

I SHOULD HEAR STILL

If I were dead and buried deep down
Under the stones of an ancient town,
I should hear still if you called to me
Thro' the dust of half a century.

If I were dead and buried at sea,
With a canvas shroud stitched over me,
I should hear still if you only came
To the farthest shore and called my name.

If I were dead and burned with fire
In the red heart of a funeral pyre,
I should hear still if you only wept
Above the urn where my ashes slept.

If I were dead and my spirit free
In the great peace of eternity,
I should hear still if you only cried
From the distant world in which I died.

Vera Larminie

BEHIND THE CLOSED EYE

I walk the old frequented ways,
That wind around the tangled braes,
I live again the sunny days
Ere I the city knew.

And scenes of old again are born,
The woodbine lassoing the thorn,
And dropping Ruth-like in the corn
The poppies weep the dew.

Above me in their hundred schools
The magpies bend their young to rules,
And like an apron full of jewels
The dewy cobweb swings.

And frisking in the stream below
The troutlets make the circles flow,
And the hungry crane doth watch them grow,
As a smoker does his rings.

Above me smokes the little town,
With its whitewashed walls and roofs of brown,
And its octagon spire toned smoothly down,
As the holy minds within.

And wondrous impudently sweet,
Half of him passion, half conceit,
The blackbird calls adown the street,
Like the Piper of Hamelin.

I hear him, and I feel the lure,
Drawing me back to the homely moor,
I'll go and close the mountain's door,
On the city's strife and din.

Francis Ledwidge

THE SHADOW PEOPLE

Old lame Bridget doesn't hear
Fairy music in the grass,
When the gloaming's on the mere
And the shadow-people pass :
Never hears their slow grey feet
Coming from the village street,
Just beyond the parson's wall,
Where the clover globes are sweet
And the mushroom's parasol
Opens in the moonlit rain.
Every night I hear them call
From their long and merry train.
Old lame Bridget says to me,
" It is just your fancy, child."
She cannot believe I see
Laughing faces in the wild,
Hands that twinkle in the sedge
Bowing at the water's edge
Where the finny minnows quiver,
Shaping on a blue wave's ledge
Bubble foam to sail the river.
And the sunny hands to me
Beckon ever, beckon ever.
Oh ! I would be wild and free
And with the shadow people be.

Francis Ledwidge

MY DOG

HAVE you seen a little dog anywhere about?
A raggy dog, a shaggy dog, who's always looking out
For some fresh mischief which he thinks he really ought to do,
He's very likely, at this minute, biting someone's shoe.

If you see that little dog, his tail up in the air,
A whirly tail, a curly tail, a dog who doesn't care
For any other dog he meets, not even for himself;
Then hide your mats, and put your meat upon the topmost shelf.

If you see a little dog, barking at the cars,
A raggy dog, a shaggy dog, with eyes like twinkling stars,
Just let me know, for though he's bad, as bad as bad can be;
I wouldn't change that dog for all the treasures of the sea.

Emily Lewis

THE LADY IN THE OLD GILT FRAME

THE lady in the old gilt frame
Looks rather stiff, but very grand.
She wears a locket and a chain,
And holds a book in her right hand.

Whenever I look up to her
  She seems to ask if I am good.
I told her I was only five,
  But I don't think she understood.

She sits upon a tall, tall chair,
  Her left hand resting on her knee.
Her dress is such a pretty blue,
  With sunlight in it like the sea.

The lady in the old gilt frame,
  Was once a little girl, they say.
I wonder if she ever played,
  At hide-and-seek, or nuts-in-May !

Emily Lewis

IN THE GREENWOOD

Love, if love should call to thee
  In the greenwood, as a bird
Calls his mate, thou canst not flee
But must needs a captive be,
  To fear and wonder.

Heart, if heart mean nothing where
  Sways the music in the bough,
Heart, if heart be wanting there,
All is wanting, nothing fair
  In heaven or under.

Take no token, hear no vow
That in city walls be made,
Words forever false as now,
Words that are no witness how
The heart be lying.

But if love should call to thee
In the greenwood, as a bird
Calls his mate, thou canst not flee
But must needs a captive be
To love undying.

Vivian Locke-Ellis

DREAM-MERCHANDISE

If in the traffic of my dreams
I might a wayside pedlar be,
Or traveller beside slow streams,
Or trader of the sea;

If I might till my garden-rood,
Contented with perfection there,
I should have careless livelihood,
To spend and not to spare.

But interest in man's large estate,
His forfeit in the bonds of time,
The matter of his mortal fate
Is matter of my rhyme.

So urges Death his dateless claim,
  So comes the scrip of Age o'erdue ;
And in the empty mart of fame
  My song is bankrupt too.

Merchant of Dreams, compare with mine
  Thy tale of traffic not in gold ;
What though our credit show decline,
  And bills of lading old ;

Be dreams our venture still ; our quest
  The country of the prophets' ken ;
The unbuilded city, the unrest
  Divine of mortal men.

Vivian Locke-Ellis

A LITTLE MORE

Love, yield a little more
  Of your sweet kindliness ;
Or bid my heart so loving you,
  To love a little less.

—Ah, let not your lips even,
  Much less your heart say so.
Your lips denied me once ; your heart
  Has never let me go.

Not far enough to save
Itself from the least pain ;
Not far enough to save my heart
From coming back again.

So, if my want has grown
A little, as before,
Love, you will only have to yield
A little, more and more.

Vivian Locke-Ellis

HUNTING SONG

The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
It sounds from hill to hill,
It pierces to the secret place
Where we are lying still,
And one of us the quarry is,
And one of us must go,
When through the arches of the wood,
We hear the dread horn blow.

A huntsman bold is Master Death,
And reckless does he ride,
And terror's hounds with bleeding fangs
Go baying at his side.
And will it be a milk-white doe,
Or little dappled fawn,
Or will it be an antlered stag
Must face the icy dawn ?

Or will it be a golden fox
  Must leap from out his lair,
Or where the trailing shadows pass
  A merry romping hare ?
The hunt is up, the horn is loud,
  By plain and covert side,
And one must run alone, alone,
  When Death abroad does ride.

But idle 'tis to crouch in fear,
  Since Death will find you out.
Then up and hold your head erect
  And pace the wood about,
And swim the stream and leap the wall,
  And race the starry mead,
Nor feel the bright teeth in your flank,
  Till they be there indeed.

For in the secret hearts of men
  Are peace and joy at one,
There is a pleasant land where stalks
  No darkness in the sun,
And through the arches of the wood
  Do break like silver foam
Young laughter and the noise of flutes,
  And voices singing home.

Sylvia Lynd

A SUSSEX CHILD

A LITTLE wood of beech trees made,
A flitting light, a flitting shade,
Wood sorrels bright
For lip's delight,
And boughs low hung
To swing among.

Beyond, a hill that naked lies
Asleep, beneath the changing skies,
And gentle sheep
Faint converse keep,
To the soft knell
Of the wether's bell.

There you may leap and shout and race,
Or breathlessly lie on your face
And watch the sea.
And clouds that flee,
And larks that shrill
All about the hill.

And carts that crawl from far below,
And climb the white road, creaking slow:
Or you fly a kite,
If the wind is right,
And you know the way,
And it's a holiday.

Sylvia Lynd

A SONG OF THE MOOR

GIVE me a moor for the long white days,
  Where the gorse flames high from the heather
And a ribbon of road that meets a haze
  Of glorious summer weather ;
And innocent clouds that rim the sky,
Too snowy white for treachery.

Give me a friend or more than a friend,
  Whose smile is good to remember,
And a summer grown riotous ere its end,
  As the year drops down to September ;
And hung in the skies of the afternoon
The misty impudent slip of a moon.

Give me a tall wood shadow-still
  Where timorous wild things scramble,
And a wall running rough up the side of a hill
  Close-liveried bright with bramble ;
And paths that scatter away from the sun,
With never a knowledge where they run.

There's Joy asleep where the lingering mist
  Still clings to the drowsy heather,
And the sun and I have made a tryst
  To awaken her together ;
And he's tapping now on the window-sill,
  To say he's missed me on the hill.

P. H. B. Lyon

SONG OF THE LITTLE FLEET.

THE moon's afloat, a lamplit boat,
Where reeds shake and sing ;
Around her dip, ship jostling ship,
The stars voyaging.
Who bends his ears may haply hear
A strange thing and sweet :
Thin voices chime in water-time,
And thus sing the fleet :

" The earth is good, with hill and wood,
A wide place and fair ;
When we look down on field and town,
We would fain voyage there.
Of the dark sea our keels were free,
But we loved earth best ;
So earth did make us road and take
Our ships to her breast.
And now we ride in shivering pride
Down dim lanes and blue,
And owls cry ' Whit! There rides the fleet ! '
And ' Luck go with you-ou-ou ! '
The pure sweet thorn that takes the morn
Breathes dreams all the night ;
But when she pales, then full we sails,
And, wisht ! sink from sight."

The stream runs gray before the day,
  The reeds shake and sing ;
Among them slip and quiver and dip,
  Ripples voyaging.
Who bends his ear perchance may hear
  A sad thing and sweet—
Thin voices chime in water-time !
  But where sails the fleet ?

Rose Macaulay

THE BLACK ARMIES

Oh, the south winds bring comfort,
  And the west wind brings the rain,
And the wind that drives through the golden gates
  Brings hope to the earth again.

Though the sea-wind sings of broken ships,
  On dim, drowned sands,
And wails of the waste waters
  That cover the lost lands,
And the moon-wind's great with pity
  For the burden of the night—
You may turn your face to all of these,
  For they are the winds of light.

But when, in the heart of silence
That throbs not at all
(So still she lies, the waiting earth,
Asleep beneath her pall)—
Oh, when in the gray willow-tops
An evil sound you hear
That is like to the hustling tread
Of a legion drunk with fear,
Bury your eyes, be deaf, be blind,
Nor ever face about,
Lest you chance to see the wicked things
That the black wind puts to rout.

(Oh, the blessed winds, have pity
For all under moon and sun,
But not for the broods of darkness
That into the silence run.
And ye shall pray, of your charity,
For all on the earth's face,
And for the souls, if souls there be,
In any other place :
But ye may not pray for the black armies
That chase above the trees,
For earth's pity and heaven's pity
Is all too strait for these.)

Rose Macaulay

ET PUIS, BONSOIR !

A SHADOW in the street, Pierrot,
Among the moonbeams stands,
Holding a rose-bud, white and rare,
Meant for your little hands.
Draw down the blind, Pierrette ! we know
A bat might reach your hair,
And in the gold lie tangled there . . .
Shut out Pierrot !

Look up the street, Pierrette, Pierrette ;
Look down towards the sea.
There is no rich old man to woo you,
No prince on bended knee.
Draw down the blind ;—no diamonds yet,
Only the rose he threw you ;
The milk-white rose—he thought he knew you,
Pierrette, Pierrette !

Yet hair turns grey : one moonlight night
Pierrette may be alone.
Look out, stoop down, and keep it fast,
The heart that is your own.
Ah, but the empty street, all white !
Ah, has the shadow passed ?

. . . . . .

Since even love must sleep at last,
Pierrette, goodnight !

Mary Adair Macdonald

YOUTH

Down the valleys and up the hill
Comes youth with wind behind him !
O, in his hands are daffodils,
And never a bond shall bind him !

Beneath the blessing of his feet
The young green corn is singing.
O, April rain is warm and sweet,
And all the earth is springing !

The star of the dawn is in his hair,
His lightening eyes are tearless.
O, every venture he will dare,
And his rebel heart is fearless !

His lovely lips are pitiless,
He spurns the old before him ;
O, they vainly clutch at his passing dress,
And curse him and adore him !

He walks unashamed and unafraid,
And wind is ever behind him !
O, at his side is a burning blade,
And never a bond shall bind him !

I. R. McLeod

DRINKING SONG

When Horace wrote his noble verse,
His brilliant, glowing line,
He must have gone to bed the worse
For good Falernian wine.
No poet yet could praise the rose
In verse that so serenly flows,
Unless he dipped his Roman nose
In good Falernian wine.

Shakespeare and Jonson too
Drank deep of barley brew—
Drank deep of barley brew, my boys,
Drank deep of barley brew!

When Alexander led his men
Against the Persian king,
He broached a hundred hogshead, then
They drank like anything.
They drank by day, they drank by night,
And when they marshalled for the fight
Each put a score of foes to flight—
Then drank like anything!

No warrior worth his salt
But quaffs the mighty malt—
But quaffs the mighty malt, my boys,
But quaffs the mighty malt!

When Patrick into Ireland went
  The works of God to do,
It was his excellent intent
  To teach men how to brew,
The holy saint had in his train
A man of splendid heart and brain—
A brewer was this worthy swain—
  To teach men how to brew.

The snakes he drove away
Were teetotallers they say—
Teetotallers they say, my boys,
Teetotallers they say!
Theodore Maynard

A SONG OF COLOURS

Gold for the crown of Mary,
  Blue for the sea and sky,
Green for the woods and the meadows
  Where small white daisies lie,
And red for the colour of Christ's blood,
  When He came to the cross to die.

These things the high God gave us
  And left in the world He made—
Gold for the hilt's enrichment,
  And blue for the sword's good blade,
And red for the roses a youth may set
  On the white brows of a maid.

Green for the cool, sweet gardens,
  Which stretch about the house,
And the delicate new frondage
  The winds of Spring arouse,
And red for the wine which a man may drink
  With his fellows in carouse.

Blue and green for the comfort
  Of tired hearts and eyes,
And red for that sudden hour which comes
  With danger and great emprise,
And white for the honour of God's throne
  When the dead shall all arise.

Gold for the cope and chalice,
  For kingly pomp and pride,
And red for the feathers men wear in their caps
  When they win a war or a bride,
And red for the robe which they dressed God in
  On the bitter day He died.

Theodore Maynard

WHEN I RIDE INTO THE TOWN

When I go riding into the town,
  When I ride into the town,
I fill my skin at the nearest inn,
  When I ride into the town.

Oh what is there then to trouble about ?
There are no such things as despair and doubt—
For when ale goes in the truth comes out—
When I ride into the town.

When I go riding out of the town,
When I ride out of the town,—
I have my men behind me then
When I ride out of the town ;
Halberd, battleaxe, culverin, bow,
Four hundred strong as out we go,
Four hundred yoemen to meet the foe—
When I ride out of the town !

When I ride into the Town of Death—
That strange and unknown town !—
It will not be all *cap-a-pie,*
But with my sword and lance laid down
Then may your Lady beside me stand ;
Saint Michael guard at my good right hand—
God rest my soul and the souls of my band !
When we ride into the town.

Theodore Maynard

KINDNESS

Of the beauty of kindness I speak,
Of a smile, of a charm
On the face it is pleasure to meet,
That gives no alarm !

Of the soul that absorbeth itself
In discovering good,
Of that power which outlasts health,
As the spell of a wood

Outlasts the sad fall of the leaves,
And in winter is fine,
And from snow and from frost receives
A garment divine.

Oh ! well may the lark sing of this,
As through rents of huge cloud
It breaks on blue gulfs that are bliss,
For they make its heart proud

With the power of wings deployed
In delightfullest air,
Yea, thus among things enjoyed
Is kindness rare.

For even the weak with surprise
Spread wings, utter song,
They can launch—in this blue they can rise,
In this kindness are strong,—

They can launch like a ship into calm,
Which was penn'd up by storm,
Which sails for the islands of balm,
Luxuriant and warm.

T. Sturge Moore

HEART OF A SEAMSTRESS

I'd like to rest these tired eyes
  On that green place where once I lay
Deep in the grass and thought the skies
  Too grand and blue to pass away.
I'd like to put this needle down
  And never stitch another seam,
And seek the place beyond the town
  Whence once I dreamed . . .
    (Ah God ! my dream).

I'd like to bathe these aching hands,
  In that wee brook I used to know
  Where after school we girls would go
And tread along its shining sands
With our bare feet, and feel the cool
  Kind lapping of each teeny wave,
  And think ourselves grown up and brave
To splash knee-deep through every pool.

I'd go there now, I would, and stay
  A long, long day, if I could choose,
I'd watch the pretty lizards play,
  And look for rubble stones, and use
A clear pool for my looking-glass
  And find no care-marks on my face,
And see again the bonny lass,
  Who found her heaven in that dear place.

I'd make a bed of ferns, and lie
  Stretched where the happy sunbeams dart
And little winds come whispering by
  And kiss these eyes (ah God ! the smart)
And maybe dreams would soothe my fret,
  And this poor body be a part
Of that green world, and I forget
  I'd come from hell . . .
    (Ah God, my heart !)

Thomas Moult

AFTER LONDON

London Bridge is broken down ;
  Green is the grass on Ludgate Hill ;
I know a farmer in Camden Town
  Killed a brock by Pentonville.

I have heard my grandam tell
  How some thousand years ago
Houses stretched from Camberwell
  Right to Highbury and Bow.

Down by Shadwell's golden meads
  Tall ships' masts would stand as thick
As the pretty tufted reeds
  That the Wapping children pick.

All the kings from end to end
Of all the world paid tribute then,
And meekly on their knees would bend
To the King of the Englishmen.

Thinks I while I dig my plot,
What if your grandam's tales be true?
Thinks I, be they true or not,
What's the odds to a fool like you?

Thinks I, while I smoke my pipe,
Here beside the tumbling Fleet,
Apples drop when they are ripe,
And when they drop are they most sweet.

J. D. C. Pellow

A HILL SONG

THERE are ways of streets and alleys
That struggle up and down,
But a kindlier way for you and me
Than roadways of the town,
Is the wild road to the hill-tops,
To where the great winds blow;
For its where the great winds wander
That you and I must go.

Up where the snows in winter,
Where the clouds are fleecy white,
Sleep soft in silver silence
Beneath the starlit night;

Where the spring's awakening wonder
Is trembling on the air,
And roused from golden slumber
Dance blossoms everywhere.

Up where the drowsy summer
Is mad with mating song—
For the hours of love run fleetly
And the days of grief are long—
Up where the dawn's first-born sunbeam
Brings promise of the day,
Like careless sunlit laughter,
To light Love's gladsome way.

So come ; we'll leave the city
To the crowds that haunt the street ;
And hand in hand we'll clamber
To where the winds come sweet.
And the hills will soothe our sorrows
Till we old joys regain,
Wrapt in their wingèd comfort
To guard against the pain.
Of hearts in weary quest
Of hopes they dare not find ;
Of love that smiled in passing,
Because an hour was kind—
For roads speak but of parting
With the ebbing day's decline,
But the hills bend down at twilight
To meet you, comrade, mine.

John Peterson

THE BROWN PUP

My little brown pup is dead,
My little brown pup is dead.
He was only a very little while ill,
And then when he suddenly lay quite still,
They told me that that was being dead.

It was yesterday morning that he died,
And I've cried . . .
I meant to be brave, like grannie said,
But he was my very own pup and he's dead,
And I want him so, I want him so—
It hurts to be sorry and want him so.

Everyone's been most dreadfully kind,
Nurse keeps begging me not to mind,
And cook made a big iced cake for my tea,
(I think she thought it might comfort me),
But, O, my little brown pup is dead,
My little darling brown pup is dead.
And I want him so, I want him so—
It's very hurting to want him so

E. Rendall

VERY NEARLY !

I NEVER *quite* saw fairy-folk
A-dancing in the glade,
Where, just beyond the hollow oak,
Their broad green rings are laid :
But, while behind that oak I hid,
One day I very nearly did !

I never *quite* saw mermaids rise
  Above the twilight sea,
When sands, left wet, neath sunset skies,
  Are blushing rosily :
But—all alone, those rocks amid—
One night I very nearly did !

I never *quite* saw Goblin Grim
  Who haunts our lumber room,
And pops his head above the rim
  Of that oak chest's deep gloom :
But once—when Mother raised the lid—
But once—when Mother raised the lid—
I very, very nearly did !

Queenie Scott-Hopper

WHAT THE THRUSH SAYS

" Come and see ! Come and see ! "
The Thrush pipes out of the hawthorn-tree :
And I and Dicky on tip-toe go
To see what treasures he wants to show.
His call is clear as a call can be—
And " Come and see ! " he says :
  " Come and see ! "

" Come and see ! Come and see ! "
His house is there in the hawthorn-tree :
The neatest house that ever you saw,
Built all of mosses and twigs and straw :
The folk who built were his wife and he—
And " Come and see ! " he says :
" Come and See ! "

" Come and see ! Come and see ! "
Within this house there are treasures three :
So warm and snug in its curve they lie—
Like three bright bits out of Spring's blue sky.
We would not hurt them, he knows ; not we !
So " Come and see ! " he says :
" Come and see ! "

" Come and see ! Come and see ! "
No thrush was ever so proud as he !
His bright-eyed lady has left those eggs
For just five minutes to stretch her legs.
He's keeping guard in the hawthorn-tree,
And " Come and see ! " he says :
" Come and see ! "

" Come and see ! Come and see ! "
He has no fear of the boys and me.
He came and shared in our meals, you know,
In hungry times of the frost and snow.
So now we share in his Secret Tree
Where " Come and see ! " he says :
" Come and see ! "

Queenie Scott-Hopper

CAESAR REMEMBERS

Caesar, that proud man,
  Sat in his tent,
Weary with victory,
  With striving spent.

Where the grey Chilterns
  Coiled and slept
That hard-lipped Emperor
  Vigil kept.

In the thin starlight
  His glimmering hordes
Fought with the hard earth—
  Spades for swords.

Out on the hill-slopes
  His helmèd host
Piled stark ramparts
  Rimmed with frost.

But Caesar cared not
  For dyke and wall,
Faint and remote
  Came the bugles' call;

Soft in the shadows
  He saw, and heard,
A Roman garden,
  A Roman bird.

" Worlds to conquer !—
But Caesar fails
To add one song
To the nightingale's ! "

Soft in the shadows
The tired man heard
A woman's laughter,
A woman's word,

Caesar, shivering,
Heard repeat
Spades on the hillside,
Sentries' feet.

William Kean Seymour

THE AMBUSH

" Wild one, wild one, fleeing through the woods,
Your skin is rent with thorns, dark fear is in your eyes."
" A deer was caught by giant snakes with soft and gleaming hoods :
They are winding round her heart until she dies."

" Wild one, wild one, quiet now your heart."
" The doe was white and beautiful, her eyes were fires of pain."
" 'Tis bitter, for the chase I willed is ruined ere the start :
By strong pursuing hounds I wished her slain."

" Wild one, wild one, break not from me so ;
The woods are fierce with hunger and day has
fled the skies,
But in the house is tenderness and dreams." " Oh,
God, I go
From the terror of his hands and hooded eyes."

William Kean Seymour

A SUSSEX SONG

THE white road leads to London Town,
By hamlet, hill and hollow,
The green path winds to Chancton Down,
Now which one shall we follow ?

Oh, London streets are paved with gold,
But who would be for changing
The wizard of wood and wold
For metal joy-estranging ?

So foot it we across the field,
And climb the low stile over :
Mount, and for you the widening weald
The drifted scent of clover,

Cloud armies mustering silently,
Their shadowy ranks retreating
Along the Down, and glimpse of sea
Why sea and sky are meeting.

The white road leads to London Town,
  By hamlet, hill and hollow,
The green paths wind to Chancton Down,
  And that's the one we'll follow.

Thomas Sharp

FOUR NIGHTS

O WHEN I shut my eyes in spring,
  A choir of heaven's swans I see,
They sail on lakes of blue, and sing
  Or shelter in a willow tree :
They sing of peace in heart and mind
Such as on earth you may not find.

When I lie down in summer-time
  I still can hear the scythes that smite
The ripened flowers in their prime,
  And still can see the meadows white.
In summer-time my rest is small,
If any rest I find at all.

In autumn when my eyes I close
  I see the yellow stars ablaze
Among the tangled winds that rose
  At sunset in a circled maze ;
Like armoured knights, they ride the skies,
And prick the closed lids of my eyes.

But when in winter-time I sleep
I nothing see, nor nothing hear ;
The angels in my spirit keep
A silent watch and, being there,
They cause my soul to lie as dead—
A stream enchanted in her bed.

Fredegond Shove

ADVENTURE SQUARE

Oh, Russell Square is Eden-fair
Engemmed in blessèd green,
With mansions fine like mellow wine
And shadows sapphirine.

When everywhere in Gordon Square
The crocus-sheet unrolls,
A rainbow-world is re-create
To tint our pallid souls.

When steeples chide and snow flakes glide,
A plumage pure to see.
Her nun-like wear gives Regent Square
A cloistered sanctity.

In Brunswick Square is lodging spare,
And window-box grotesque,
But fancies drift like London leaves
In burnished arabesque.

There's yet another Square, not grand,
Nor gay nor virginal,
Men know it by another name
Perhaps, or not at all.

Night's rebel stars grow riotous
Through Pagan poplar trees,
The wide rooms with their cheerful fires
Are mostly nurseries.

Street-organs play throughout the day
Youth-symphonies long vanished,
Street-singers joke with other folk
Whom stricter squares have banished.

The unexpected bubbles forth
In revel and in labour,
Each dweller there is someone's love
And everybody's neighbour !

Oh attic, basement, railing, door,
Oh song and laughter flaunted ;
Adventure Square is anywhere
That you and I have haunted !

Jean Guthrie-Smith

SOME LONDON TRIOLETS

I

From Westminster to Camden Town
The pavements are a star-mosaic ;
The petalled drift of stars blown down
Make Westminster and Camden Town

Dream-isles afloat on thistle down ;
Each puddle is a lily-lake
From Westminster to Camden Town
And pavements are a star-mosaic.

II

All legend is embodied here,
Nor can the rose romantic fail
Where Lancelot sups with Guinevere ;
All legend is embodied here
In dim Soho, and ever dear
Blue lighted Chelsea holds the Grail ;
All legend is embodied here,
Nor can the rose romantic fail.

III

These rakish roofs of Bermondsey,
With chimneys that grimace and wink,
Are curiously dear to me ;
These rakish roofs of Bermondsey,
A ragamuffin company ;
Yet truly kind of heart, I think,
These rakish roofs of Bermondsey,
With chimneys that grimace and wink.

IV

Oh first and fairest Highgate pond,
Yours is a world of make-believe,
As if Titania waved her wand ;
Oh first and fairest Highgate pond,

Yours are the waters many-swanned
Lull the Hesperides at Eve :
Oh first and fairest Highgate pond,
Yours is a world of make-believe !

V

I wish all happy folk could know
These ways that I have walked with you,
They gleam in the black heart of Bow ;
I wish all happy folk could know
These ways, for they would love them so,
Our moony park, our gardened Kew.
I wish all happy folk could know
These ways that I have walked with you.

Jean Guthrie-Smith

THE BALLAD OF A MOTOR-BUS

You get in at Ludgate Circus,
  Where in regiments they stand,
All throbbing underneath the bridge,
  And pointing to the Strand—
All pageantry with colours,
  All poetry with words,
Wait those blazoned motor-'buses
  In their fiercely panting herds.

There are 'buses for the East,
  There are 'buses for the West,
For North and South and Central
  And where heaven pleases best—

For the Elephant and Castle,
  Gospel Oak and Parson's Green,
Some for Chelsea, some for Putney,
  Some for Barnes, and some for Sheen.

There are some that cross the river,
  And they see the steamers crawl
With dirty belching smoke-stacks
  To the Pool or London Wall—
They rumble down the dingy streets
  Where dingy houses grow
Like quickly sprouting toadstools
  In an evil yellow row.

And some go plunging northward
  Up the hills to Kensal Rise,
And some are bound for Hampstead
  And the smokeless windy skies,
And some go east to Hackney,
  And the long Commercial Road,
Past the buying and the selling,
  To poverty's abode.

But the 'bus I take goes westward—
  It leaves Charing Cross behind,
Then it bounds up Piccadilly,
  Through the smoky, dusty wind—
The first lamps have been lighted,
  And across St. James's Park
The early lights of Westminster
  Are splashing on the dark.

The dusk is falling gently,
And from the streets below
The London glare climbs upward
To make the sad skies glow—
Through the mingled dusk and dazzle
We hum swiftly on our way,
While the wind brings to our faces
The first damps of the day.

It is summer, it is evening.
Early stars are in the sky,
Shining dim above the smoke-wreaths,
While the western bonfires die—
And the wind sings of the river
That beyond the city flows,
Of the pleasant westward reaches
That no cargo-tramper knows.

So we spin through holy Brompton,
We leave Kensington behind,
We thunder down to Fulham,
Past churches tall and blind—
Till we come at last to Putney,
And the starlit river gleams
Through darkness up to Richmond,
A thoroughfare of dreams.

And its there that you are waiting,
O my faithful love, for me !
Through the dark your eyes are straining
My chariot to see—

For the working-day is over,
All its dust and hurry past,
And we go to the river,
With my hand in yours at last.

While the motor-'bus rolls onward—
And we stop to watch it tear
All burning through the twilight,
Mysterious and fair.
It was our love's bright chariot,
The torch of our desires,
Kindling the London darkness
With youth's eternal fires.

O youth !—O youth in London !
Shall they ever be forgot,
Those young and eager footsteps
On pavements hard and hot ?
The dust is in the breezes,
Stinks of petrol stain the air,
But youth has come to London,
And has found a garden there.

Sheila Kaye-Smith

THE OPTIMIST

THE earth is green, the earth is wide,
And when its widest bound is past,
There are the stars on every side,
For soaring souls to win at last—

There is no bound for those that fly,
Floorless and roofless is the sky,
Hope knows no hindrance but clipped wings,
So, throughout all life's little while,
My heart is happy, and I smile,
In spite of many things,
In spite of pain,
In spite of fears,
In spite of want,
In spite of tears
—In spite of you.

Mine is the future, and the past,
The growing and the dying gleam,
Mine is ambition till the last,
And there are dreams for me to dream.
Mine is the sagging Winter day,
Mine too the softness of the May,
The lusty strength of bread and wine,
The valiant dawn, the pondering night,
The flowering change from dark to light,
All holy things are mine,
In spite of pain,
In spite of fears,
In spite of want,
In spite of tears
—In spite of you.

Adventure weaves the shining dress,
Experience at last shall wear,
Grief, rapture, triumph, bitterness
Combine to trace the pattern there.
All sorrow that my soul assails
Helps to embroider golden veils
To deck me in the glorious day
When I shall reign in endless rest,
So strength and laughter fill my breast,
And on my heartstrings play,
In spite of pain,
In spite of fears,
In spite of want,
In spite of tears
—In spite of you.

Sheila Kaye-Smith

WILLOW'S FORGE

I've crossed the fields from Lattenden
And haunted Honey Mill,
My feet and all my clothes are torn,
Yet on I stumble still—
I must not stay to speak to you
Or falter with my pain.
But hasten on to Willow's Forge,
At the bottom of the lane.

Folk call me mad—perhaps 'tis true—
My life is full of fears,
At whiles I bite my arms, and then
I wash the blood with tears.
I scream, I talk to owls and crows,
Hear voices from the sky,
I see the spooks that ride o'nights—
Men shudder when I'm nigh.

My love was hanged for stealing sheep,
'Twas that which sent me mad—
He was a liar and a thief,
But, O, I loved my lad!
I've wandered wildly ever since,
And last night, 'neath the wain,
I saw my love at Willow's Forge,
At the bottom of the lane.

His face was wan, his burning eye
Was like a coal from hell
(He's with the damned souls, all folk say,
But O I love him well!)
His hands were misty as the moon
That bathed his awful brow,
His lips and breast were smeared with blood
His cheeks were white as snow.

'O tell me, love, where have you been
This weary, sleepless while?
I've screamed and wept to kiss your lips,
I've hungered for your smile.

Have you been down amongst the damned,
Where, like the sheep in fold,
The dead men lie, and bleat and cry
And shiver in the cold ?

' Have you been up to where the clouds
Are sailing in the blue,
And have they thrown you down, and said
'Twas no fit place for you ?
Or have you roamed all Sussex through
In weariness and pain,
To meet me here at Willow's Forge,
At the bottom of the lane ? '

He nothing said at all, but stared
With glazed and dreadful eye,
His red lips shook, as if he strove
To part them with a cry.
He could not speak, and O, I thought
He'd shiver from my sight,
And leave me lone at Willow's Forge,
In terror of the night.

' O kiss me lad, before you go ! '
I cried and raised my head.
He stooped his scarlet lips to me,
The living kissed the dead.
But O his mouth was all on fire,
And burned my cheek and hair,
I screamed aloud, and he had gone,
And left me standing there.

I told my mother what had passed,
She shuddered at my tale—
' You've seen the moonlight through the trees
That shiver in the gale ;
And as for your burnt cheek my girl,
Which makes you sob with pain,
You've kissed the fire at Willow's Forge,
At the bottom of the lane.'

But though she speaks and though I hear,
I will not aught believe,
But that at last I've met and kissed
The lad for whom I grieve.
And if I haunt the meeting spot,
I'll see him there again—
That's why I haste to Willow's Forge,
At the bottom of the lane.

Sheila Kaye-Smith

THE SONG OF THE UNGIRT RUNNERS

We swing ungirded hips,
And lightened are our eyes,
The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
We know not whom we trust,
Nor whitherward we fare,
But we must run because we must
Through the great wide air.

The waters of the seas
  Are troubled as by storm,
The tempest strips the trees
  And does not leave them warm.
Does the tearing tempest pause ?
  Do the tree-tops ask it why ?
So we run without a cause
  'Neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips,
  We do not run for prize.
But the storm the water whips
  And wave howls to the skies,
The winds arise and strike it
  And scatter it like sand,
And we run because we like it,
  Through the broad bright land.

Charles Hamilton Sorley

THE BACKWARD GLANCE

They set him on a sunny road,
  His face toward the world's expanse :
" Yonder," they said, " the victor's crown ;
  Beware, the backward glance."

" Run swift, run true, the crown is thine ! "
  Unhindered through the cresent hours
He ran a fair and level road
  That went between the flowers.

But when he left the valley path
And up the hill began to climb,
He heard the sound of distant feet
That with his own kept time.

He closed his ears, he steeled his heart,
Yet still that sound came down the wind;
He turned and saw a dreadful form
That followed far behind.

Then forward on his way he sprang,
Scaling the hill with shortening breadth;
But even on his ears there rang
The pattering feet of Death.

At noon upon a lonely height
He stood, and saw the road run down
A shining ribbon of desire
Straight to the promised crown.

"Lord of my life am I!" he cried,
"The crown is mine." But as the hope
Flamed in his breast he looked behind:
Death's feet were on the slope.

Then down the steep and sudden path,
Swift to the goal he took his flight.
Far down the hill he looked again—
Death stood upon the height.

On, on he sped, until the crown
Against the glowing sunset shone :
Yet ever at the backward glance
The following form drew on.

Fast through the gathering dusk he flew :
He leapt, the guerdon to embrace.
But as he leapt, he looked behind—
Death looked him in the face.

Evelyn Underhill

THE MORNING BATHE

COME out, for it is morning, and the stars are on the grass ;
The shadows of the hedgerow-elms lie long and lush and green ;
The gossamers are spread to net your ankles as you pass,
Or float, to curl across your cheek their fairy films unseen.

Come out across the meadows to the diving-pool we know,
Beneath the red-ripe rowan boughs that fence and keep it cool ;
There's a tumbling fall above it, and a freshet spreads below ;
Between them, clear as amber, deep for diving, lies the pool.

Come, while the mist lies yet within the hollows
of the hill,
While yet the hill's intenser blue is trembling
into gray;
Come, while the air is tender, and the rougher
winds are still,
And all earth's lines are lovely in the childhood
of the day.

Lewis E. Upcott

A PETITION

All that a man might ask, thou hast given me,
England,
Birth-right and happy childhood's long heart's
ease,
And love whose range is deep beyond all sounding,
And wider than all seas.

A heart to front the world and find God in it,
Eyes blind enow, but not too blind to see
The lovely things behind the dross and darkness,
And lovelier things to be.

And friends whose loyalty time nor death shall
weaken,
And quenchless hope and laughter's golden store;
All that a man might ask, thou has given me,
England,
Yet grant thou one thing more:

That now when envious foes would spoil thy
splendour,
Unversed in arms, a dreamer such as I
May in thy ranks be deemed not all unworthy,
England, for thee to die.

R. E. Vernède

TO AN ENGLISH SHEEP-DOG

Old dog, what times we had, you, she and I,
Since first you came and with your trustful air
Blundered into her lap—a valiant, shy,
Small tail-shaped woolley bear.

What lovely days we had; how fast they flew
In hill-side ramblings, gallopings by the sea:
You grew too large for laps but never grew
Too large for loyalty.

We have known friends who living passed away,
Your faith no man could turn, no passion kill;
Even when Death called, you would scarce obey
Until you knew our will.

Out in the fields I bore you in my arms,
Dear Thick-coat, on your grave the grasses
spring;
But He that sees no sparrow meets with harms
Hath your soul's shepherding.

R. E. Vernède

A WILTSHIRE MAN AT SEA

THE golden leaves, now ceaselessly careering
In oak-crowned Severnake,
Gallop like tiny horsemen down the clearing,
Rest in the deep fern brake.

Far up at Glorian the wind is sighing,
And as the light grows less
Across the down-land sounds the plover's crying,
The voice of loneliness.

Thither, from this sad waste of waters streaming,
All the unending night,
My heart returns, to see by Kennet gleaming
One cottage window-light.

Yet for your sake it is that I must roam now,
Dear land, dear lads I know.
I love you so, I could not stay at home now
Nor pay the debt I owe.

E. Hilton Young

CHRISTMAS

A BOY was born at Bethlehem
That knew the haunts of Galilee.
He wandered on Mount Lebanon,
And learned to love each forest tree.

But I was born at Marlborough,
And love the homely faces there ;
And for all other men besides
'Tis little love I have to spare.

I should not mind to die for them,
My own dear downs, my comrades true,
But that great heart at Bethlehem,
He died for men He never knew.

And yet, I think, at Golgotha,
As Jesus' eyes were closed in death,
They saw with love most passionate
The village street at Nazareth

E. Hilton Young

A BEE'S WAY

Bees know the way of things,
Round again and up again and over,
Making such a business of the hive,
Making such a burling in the clover ;
Honey-bees, hive-bees,
Humming in the lime-trees,
Humble-bee, hermit bee, dumbledore and rover,
Honey-drive, honey-drive,
Sweet scent and sun alive,
Tumble through the meadow when summer plays drover.

Round again, round again,
Pride-gold and play of wings,
Buttercups brimming, and the sun splashed over.
Big bees booming,
What the little bees say of things,
Drones humdrumming about Queens for their wives,
Honey-bees fuming !—Ah, bees know the way of things !
Making such a burly in the hives,
Making such a business of the clover.
Honey-drive, money-drive—,
Hum go the play things,
Drone-man, lonely-man, humbug and rover ;
Money lives, sunny lives,—
Lo ! men go the way of things,
Up again and round again, and down—and all is over !

Geoffrey Winthrop Young

THE LITTLE GREEN GOD

THE lad may be toiling
And foiling the lassie,
And work be the thought and the will ;
All learning be labour
To beggar one's neighbour,

All life be a clod
And bare with nought hidden ;—
When over the hill
Of a sudden, unbidden,
Comes leaping the little green god.

The day may be making
And breaking the dew-webs,
Or lingering late on the pass ;
The man may be striving
At dawn for his living,
Or checking the nod
Of old age after noonday ;—
When over the grass
Like the mist in a moon ray
Comes drifting the little green god.

All sunburnt, and scorning
The warning of elders,
With the laughter of stars in his eyes ;
Green-tunicked, keen-darted,
Brown-haired, golden-hearted,
His little feet shod
With the wings of new loving,
From far in the skies,
To new melody moving,
Comes tripping the little green god.

The heart may drift blindly,
Unkindly be treated,
And choke in the weeds of the world ;
Be eddying only
On shoals of the lonely ;—
When lo ! comes a prod
From a mischievous quiver,
And away we are whirled
On the passionate river
To the lilt of the little green god.

He's chuckling behind us,
He'll find us in season,
He waits but the moment in thought ;
He may touch us in weeping,
Or smile in our sleeping ;—
Then over the sod
In a rainbow of laughter
Our footsteps are caught
And we're hurrying after
Our life-love, the little green god.

Geoffrey Winthrop Young

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